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THE WORKS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE

VOLUME VII

MISCELLANEOUS

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CHARLES LEVER*

THE first point to be observed in the consideration of "Charles O'Malley" is the great *popularity* of the work. We believe that in this respect it has surpassed even the inimitable compositions of Mr. Dickens. At all events it has met with a most extensive sale; and, although the graver journals have avoided its discussion, the ephemeral press has been nearly if not quite unanimous in its praise. To be sure the commendation, although unqualified, cannot be said to have abounded in specification, or to have been, in any regard, of a satisfactory character to one seeking precise ideas on the topic of the book's particular merit. It appears to us, in fact, that the cabalistical words "fun," "rollicking" and "devil-may-care," if indeed words they be, have been made to stand in good stead of all critical comment in the case of the work now under review. We first saw these dexterous expressions in a fly-leaf of "Opinions of the Press" appended to the renowned "Harry Lorrequer" by his publisher in Dublin. Thence transmitted, with complacent echo, from critic to critic, through daily, weekly and monthly journals without number, they have come at length to form a pendant and a portion of our author's celebrity—have come to be regarded as sufficient response to the few ignoramuses, who, obstinate as ignorant, and fool-hardy as obstinate, venture to propound a question or two

* Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon. By Harry Lorrequer. With Forty Illustrations by Phiz. Complete in one volume. Carey & Hart: Philadelphia.

about the true claims of "Harry Lorrequer" or the justice of the pretensions of "Charles O'Malley."

We shall not insult our readers by supposing any one of them unaware of the fact, that a book may be even exceedingly *popular* without *any* legitimate literary merit. This fact can be proven by numerous examples which, now and here, it will be unnecessary and perhaps indecorous to mention. The dogma, then, is absurdly false, that the popularity of a work is *primâ facie* evidence of its excellence in some respects; that is to say, the dogma is false if we confine the meaning of excellence (as here of course it must be confined) to excellence in a literary sense. The truth is, that the popularity of a book is *primâ facie* evidence of just the converse of the proposition—it is evidence of the book's *demerit*, inasmuch as it shows a "stooping to conquer"—inasmuch as it shows that the author has dealt largely, if not altogether, in matters which are susceptible of appreciation by the mass of mankind—by uneducated thought—by uncultivated taste, by unrefined and unguided passion. So long as the world retains its present point of civilization, so long will it be almost an axiom that no extensively *popular* book, in the right application of the term, can be a work of high merit, *as regards those particulars of the work which are popular*. A book may be readily sold, may be universally read, for the sake of some half or two-thirds of its matter, which half or two-thirds may be susceptible of popular appreciation, while the one-half or one-third remaining may be the delight of the highest intellect and genius, and absolute *caviare* to the rabble. And just as

Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci,

so will the writer of fiction, who looks most saga-

ciously to his own *interest*, combine all votes by intermingling with his loftier efforts such amount of less ethereal matter as will give general currency to his composition. And here we shall be pardoned for quoting some observations of the English artist, H. Howard. Speaking of *imitation*, he says:

> The pleasure that results from it, even when employed upon the most ordinary materials, will always render that property of our art the most attractive with the majority, because it may be enjoyed with the least mental exertion. *All* men are in some degree judges of it. The cobbler in his own line may criticise Apelles; and popular opinions are never to be wholly disregarded concerning that which is addressed to the public—who, to a certain extent, are generally right; although as the language of the refined can never be intelligible to the uneducated, so the higher styles of art can never be acceptable to the multitude. In proportion as a work rises in the scale of intellect, it must necessarily become limited in the number of its admirers. For this reason the judicious artist, even in his loftiest efforts, will endeavor to introduce some of those qualities which are interesting to all, as a passport for those of a more intellectual character.

And these remarks upon painting—remarks which are mere truisms in themselves—embody nearly the whole *rationale* of the topic now under discussion. It may be added, however, that the *skill* with which the author addresses the lower taste of the populace, is often a source of pleasure, because of admiration, to a taste higher and more refined, and may be made a point of comment and of commendation by the critic.

In our review of "Barnaby Rudge," we were prevented, through want of space, from showing how Mr. Dickens had so well succeeded in uniting all suffrages. What we have just said, however, will suffice upon this point. While he has appealed, in

innumerable regards, to the most exalted intellect, he has meanwhile invariably touched a certain string whose vibrations are omni-prevalent. We allude to his powers of *imitation*—that species of imitation to which Mr. Howard has reference—the *faithful* depicting of what is called still-life, and particularly of *character* in humble condition. It is his close observation and imitation of nature here which have rendered him popular, while his higher qualities with the ingenuity evinced in addressing the general taste, have secured him the good word of the informed and intellectual.

But this is an important point upon which we desire to be distinctly understood. We wish here to record our positive dissent (be that dissent worth what it may) from a very usual opinion—the opinion that Mr. Dickens has done justice to his own genius—that any man ever failed to do grievous wrong to his own genius—in appealing to the popular judgment *at all*. As a matter of pecuniary policy alone, is any such appeal defensible. But we speak, of course, in relation to fame—in regard to that

> ——spur which the true spirit doth raise
> To scorn delight and live laborious days.

That a perfume should be found by any "true spirit" in the incense of mere popular applause, is, to our own apprehension at least, a thing inconceivable, inappreciable,—a paradox which gives the lie unto itself—a mystery more profound than the well of Democritus. Mr. Dickens has no more business with the rabble than a seraph with a *chapeau de bras*. What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba? What is he to Jacques Bonhomme* or Jacques Bonhomme to him? The higher genius is a rare gift

* Nickname for the populace in the middle ages.

and divine. Ω'τολλων ου παντι ραεινεται, ος μιν ιδη, μεγας ουτος — not to all men Apollo shows himself; *he* is *alone great* who beholds him.* And his greatness has its office God-assigned. But that office is not a low communion with low, or even with ordinary intellect. The holy—the electric spark of genius is the medium of intercourse between the noble and more noble mind. For lesser purposes there are humbler agents. There are puppets enough, able enough, willing enough, to perform in literature the little things to which we have had reference. For one Fouqué there are fifty Molières. For one Angelo there are five hundred Jan Steens. For one Dickens there are five million Smollets, Fieldings, Marryatts, Arthurs, Cocktons, Bogtons and Frogtons.

It is, in brief, the duty of all whom circumstances have led into criticism—it is, at least, a duty from which *we* individually shall never shrink—to uphold the true dignity of genius, to combat its degradation, to plead for the exercise of its powers in those bright fields which are its legitimate and peculiar province, and which for it alone lie gloriously outspread.

But to return to "Charles O'Malley," and its popularity. We have endeavored to show that this latter must not be considered in any degree as the measure of its merit, but should rather be understood as indicating a deficiency in this respect, when we bear in mind, as we should do, the highest aims of intellect in fiction. A slight examination of the work, (for in truth it is worth no more,) will sustain us in what we have said. The plot is exceedingly meagre. Charles O'Malley, the hero, is a young orphan Irishman, living in Galway county, Ireland, in the house of his uncle Godfrey, to whose sadly

* Callimachus—*Hymn to Apollo.*

encumbered estates the youth is heir apparent and presumptive. He becomes enamoured, while on a visit to a neighbor, of Miss Lucy Dashwood, and finds a rival in a Captain Hammersley. Some words carelessly spoken by Lucy, inspired him with a desire for military renown. After sojourning, therefore, for a brief period, at Dublin University, he obtains a commission and proceeds to the peninsula, with the British army under Wellington. Here he distinguishes himself; is promoted; and meets frequently with Miss Dashwood, whom obstinately, and in spite of the lady's own acknowledgment of love for himself, he supposes in love with Hammersley. Upon the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo he returns home; finds his uncle, of course, *just* dead; and sells his commission to disencumber the estate. Presently Napoleon escapes from Elba, and our hero, obtaining a staff appointment under Picton, returns to the Peninsula, is present at Waterloo, (where Hammersley is killed) saves the life of Lucy's father for the second time, as he has already twice saved that of Lucy herself; is rewarded by the hand of the latter; and making his way back to O'Malley Castle, "lives happily all the rest of his days."

In and about this plot (if such it may be called) there are more absurdities than we have patience to enumerate. The author, or narrator, for example, is supposed to be Harry Lorrequer as far as the end of the preface, which by the way, is one of the best portions of the book. O'Malleys then tells his own story. But the publishing office of the "Dublin University Magazine" (in which the narrative originally appeared) having been burned down, there ensues a sad confusion of identity between O'Malley and Lorrequer, so that it is difficult, for the nonce, to say which is which. In the want of copy conse-

quent upon the disaster, James, the novelist, comes in to the relief of Lorrequer, or perhaps of O'Malley, with one of the flattest and most irrelevant of love-tales. Meantime, in the story proper are repetitions without end. We have already said that the hero *saves the life of his mistress twice, and of her father twice.* But not content with this, he has *two* mistresses, and *saves the life of both, at different periods, in precisely the same manner*—that is to say, by causing his horse, in each instance, to perform a Munchausen side-leap at the moment when a spring forward would have impelled him upon his beloved. And then we have one unending, undeviating succession of junketings, in which "devilled kidneys" are never by any accident found wanting. The unction and pertinacity with which the author discusses what he chooses to denominate "devilled kidneys" are indeed edifying, to say no more. The truth is, that drinking, telling anecdotes, and devouring "devilled kidneys" may be considered as the sum total, as the *thesis* of the book. Never in the whole course of his eventful life, does Mr. O'Malley get "two or three assembled together" without seducing them forthwith to a table, and placing before them a dozen of wine and a dish of "devilled kidneys." This accomplished, the parties begin what seems to be the business of the author's existence—the narration of unusually *broad tales*—like those of the Southdown mutton. And here, in fact, we have the *plan* of that whole work of which the "United Service Gazette" has been pleased to vow it "would rather be the author than of all the 'Pickwicks' and 'Nicklebys' in the world"—a sentiment which we really blush to say has been echoed by many respectable members of our own press. The general plot or narrative is a mere thread upon which after-

dinner anecdotes, some good, some bad, some utterly worthless, and *not one truly original*, are strung with about as much method, and about half as much dexterity, as we see ragged urchins employ in stringing the kernels of nuts.

It would, indeed, be difficult to convey to one who has not examined this production for himself, any idea of the exceedingly rough, clumsy, and inartistical manner in which even this bald conception is carried out. The stories are absolutely dragged in by the ears. So far from finding them result naturally or plausibly from the conversation by the interlocutors, even the blindest reader may perceive the author's struggling and blundering effort to introduce them. It is rendered quite evident that they were originally "on hand," and that "O'Malley" has been concocted for their introduction. Among other *niaïseries* we observe the silly trick of whetting appetite by delay. The conversation over the "kidneys" is brought, for example, to such a pass that one of the speakers is called upon for a story, which he forthwith declines for any reason, or for none. At a subsequent "broil" he is again pressed, and again refuses, and it is not until the reader's patience is fairly exhausted, and he has consigned both the story and its author to Hades, that the gentleman in question is prevailed upon to discourse. The only conceivable result of this *fanfarronade* is the ruin of the tale when told, through exaggerating anticipation respecting it.

The anecdotes thus narrated being the staple of the book, and the awkward manner of their interlocution having been pointed out, it but remains to be seen what the anecdotes are, in themselves, and what is the merit of their narration. And here, let it not be supposed that we have any design to deprive the

devil of his due. There are several very excellent anecdotes in "Charles O'Malley" very cleverly and pungently told. Many of the scenes in which Monsoon figures are rich—less, however, from the scenes themselves than from the piquant, but by no means original character of Monsoon—a drunken, maudlin, dishonest old Major, given to communicativeness and mock morality over his cups, and not over careful in detailing adventures which tell against himself. One or two of the college pictures are unquestionably good—but might have been better. In general, the reader is made to feel that fine subjects have fallen into unskillful hands. By way of instancing this assertion, and at the same time of conveying an idea of the tone and character of the stories, we will quote one of the shortest, and assuredly one of the best.

"Ah, by-the-by, how's the Major?"

"Charmingly: only a little bit in a scrape just now. Sir Arthur—Lord Wellington, I mean—had him up for his fellows being caught pillaging, and gave him a devil of a rowing a few days ago.

"'Very disorderly corps yours, Major O'Shaughnessy,' said the general; 'more men up for punishment than any regiment in the service.'

"Shaugh muttered something, but his voice was lost in a loud cock-a-doo-doo-doo, that some bold chanticleer set up at the moment.

"'If the officers do their duty, Major O'Shaughnessy, these acts of insubordination do not occur.'

"'Cock-a-doo-doo-doo,' was the reply. Some of the staff found it hard not to laugh; but the general went on—

"'If, therefore, the practice does not cease, I'll draft the men into West India regiments."

"'Cock-a-doo-doo-doo!'

"'And if any articles pillaged from the inhabitants are detected in the quarters, or about the persons of the troops'—

"'Cock-a-doo-doo-*doo!*' screamed louder here than ever.

"'Damn that cock—where is it?'

"'There was a general look around on all sides, which seemed in vain; when a tremendous repetition of the cry resounded from O'Shaughnessy's coat-pocket: thus detecting the valiant Major himself in the very practice of his corps. There was no standing this: every one burst out into a peal of laughter; and Lord Wellington himself could not resist, but turned away muttering to himself as he went—'Damned robbers every man of them,' while a final warnote from the Major's pocket closed the interview."

Now this is an anecdote at which every one will laugh; but its effect might have been vastly heightened by putting a few words of grave morality and reprobation of the conduct of his troops, into the mouth of O'Shaughnessy, upon whose character they would have told well. The cock, in interrupting the thread of his discourse, would thus have afforded an excellent context. We have scarcely a reader, moreover, who will fail to perceive the want of *tact* shown in dwelling upon the *mirth* which the anecdote occasioned. The error here is precisely like that of a man's laughing at his own spoken jokes. Our author is uniformly guilty of this mistake. He has an absurd fashion, also, of informing the reader at the conclusion of each of his anecdotes, that, however good the anecdotes might be, he (the reader) cannot enjoy it to the full extent in default of the *manner* in which it was orally narrated. He has no business to say anything of the kind. It is his duty to convey the manner not less than the matter of his narratives.

But we may say of these latter that, in general, they have the air of being *remembered* rather than invented. No man who has seen much of the rough life of the camp will fail to recognise among them many very old acquaintances. Some of them are as ancient as the hills, and have been, time out of

mind, the common property of the bivouac. They have been narrated orally all the world over. The chief merit of the writer is, that he has been the first to collect and to print them. It is observable, in fact, that the second volume of the work is very far inferior to the first. The author seems to have exhausted his whole hoarded store in the beginning. His conclusion is barren indeed, and but for the historical details (for which he has no claim to merit) would be especially prosy and dull. *Now the true invention never exhausts itself* It is mere cant and ignorance to talk of the possibility of the really imaginative man's "writing himself out." His soul but derives nourishment from the streams that flow therefrom. As well prate about the aridity of the eternal ocean εξ ουπερ παντες ποταμοι. So long as the universe of thought shall furnish matter for novel combination, so long will the spirit of true genius be original, be exhaustless—be itself.

A few cursory observations. The book is filled to overflowing with songs of very doubtful excellence, the most of which are put into the mouth of Micky Free, an amusing Irish servant of O'Malley's, and are given as his impromptu effusions. The subject of the improvisos is always the matter in hand at the moment of composition. The author evidently prides himself upon his poetical powers, about which the less we say the better; but if anything were wanting to assure us of his absurd ignorance and inappreciation of Art, we should find the fullest assurance in the mode in which these doggerel verses are introduced.

The occasional sentiment with which the volumes are interspersed there is an absolute necessity for skipping.

Can anybody tell us what is meant by the affecta-

tion of the word *L'envoy* which is made the heading of two prefaces?

That portion of the account of the battle of Waterloo which gives O'Malley's experiences while a prisoner, and in close juxta-position to Napoleon, bears evident traces of having been translated, and very literally too, from a French manuscript.

The English of the work is sometimes even amusing. We have continually, for example, *eat*, the present, for *ate*, the perfect—page 17. At page 16 we have this delightful sentence: "Captain Hammersley, however, *never* took further notice of me, but continued to recount, for the amusement of those *about*, several excellent stories of his military career, which I confess were heard with every *test* of delight by all save me." At page 357 we have some sage talk about "the entire of the army"; and at page 368 the accomplished O'Malley speaks of "*drawing* a last look upon his sweetheart." These things arrest our attention as we open the book at random. It abounds in them, and in vulgar-isms even much worse then they.

But why speak of vulgarisms of language? There is a disgusting vulgarism of thought which pervades and contaminates this whole production, and from which a delicate or lofty mind will shrink as from a pestilence. Not the least repulsive manifestation of this leprosy is to be found in the author's blind and grovelling worship of mere rank. Of the Prince Regent, that filthy compound of all that is bestial —that lazar-house of all moral corruption—he scruples not to speak in terms of the grossest adulation—sneering at Edmund Burke in the same villainous breath in which he extols the talents, the graces and the *virtues* of George the Fourth! That any man, to-day, can be found so degraded in heart

as to style this reprobate, "one who, in every feeling of his nature, and in every feature of his deportment was every inch a prince"—is matter for grave reflection and sorrowful debate. The American, at least, who shall peruse the concluding pages of the book now under review, and not turn in disgust from the base sycophancy which infects them, is unworthy of his country and his name. But the truth is, that a gross and contracted soul renders itself unquestionably manifest in almost every line of the composition.

And this—*this* is the work, in respect to which its author, aping the airs of intellect, prates about his "haggard cheek," his "sunken eye," his "aching and tired head," his "nights of toil," and (good heavens) his "days of thought!" That the thing is popular we grant—while that we cannot deny the fact, we grieve. But the career of true taste is onward—and now moves more vigorously onward than ever—and the period, perhaps, is not hopelessly distant, when in decrying the mere balderdash of such matters as "Charles O'Malley," we shall do less violence to the feelings and judgment even of the populace, than, we much fear, has been done in this article.

FRANCIS MARYATT

IT has been well said that "the success of certain works may be traced to sympathy between the author's mediocrity of ideas, and mediocrity of ideas on the part of the public." In commenting on this passage, Mrs. Gore, herself a shrewd philosopher, observes that, whether as regards men or books, there exists an excellence too excellent for general favor. To "make a hit"—to captivate the public eye, ear, or understanding without a certain degree of merit—is impossible; but the "hardest hit" is seldom made, indeed we may say *never* made, by the highest merit. When we wrote the word *seldom* we were thinking of Dickens and the "Curiosity Shop," a work unquestionably of " the highest merit," and which at a first glance appears to have made the most unequivocal of "hits" —but we suddenly remembered that the compositions called "Harry Lorrequer" and "Charles O'Malley" had borne the palm from "The Curiosity Shop" in point of what is properly termed *popularity*.

There can be no question, we think, that the philosophy of all this *is* to be found in the apothegm with which we began. Marryatt is a singular instance of its truth. He has always been a very popular writer in the most rigorous sense of the word. His books are essentially "mediocre." His ideas are the common property of the mob, and have been their common property time out of mind. We look throughout his writings in vain for the slightest indication of originality—for the faintest incentive

to thought. His plots, his language, his opinions are neither adapted nor intended for scrutiny. We must be contented with them as sentiments, rather than as ideas; and properly to estimate them, even in this view, we must bring ourselves into a sort of identification with the sentiment of the mass. Works composed in this spirit are sometimes purposely so composed by men of superior intelligence, and here we call to mind the *Chansons* of Béranger. But usually they are the natural exponent of the vulgar thought in the person of a vulgar thinker. In either case they claim for themselves *that* which, for want of a more definite expression, has been called by critics *nationality*. Whether this nationality in letters is a fit object for high-minded ambition, we cannot here pause to inquire. If it is, then Captain Marryatt occupies a more desirable position than, in our heart, we are willing to award him.

"Joseph Rushbrook"* is not a book with which the critic should occupy many paragraphs. It is not very dissimiliar to "Poor Jack," which latter is, perhaps, the best specimen of its author's cast of thought, and *national* manner, although inferior in interest to "Peter Simple."

The plot can only please those who swallow the probabilities of "Sinbad the Sailor," or "Jack and the Bean-Stalk"—or we should have said, more strictly, the incidents; for of plot, properly speaking, there is none at all.

Joseph Rushbrook is an English soldier who, having long served his country and received a wound in the head, is pensioned and discharged. He be-

* Joseph Rushbrook, or the Poacher. By Captain Marryatt, author of Peter Simple, Jacob Faithful, etc., etc. Two Volumes. Philadelphia: Carey and Hart.

comes a poacher, and educates his son (the hero of the tale, and also named Joseph) to the same profession. A peddler, called Byres, is about to betray the father, who avenges himself by shooting him. The son takes the burden of the crime upon himself, and flees the country. A reward is offered for his apprehension—a reward which one Furness, a schoolmaster, is very anxious to obtain. This Furness dogs the footsteps of our hero, much as Fagin, the Jew, dogs those of Oliver Twist, forcing him to quit place after place, just as he begins to get comfortably settled. In thus roaming about, little Joseph meets with all kinds of outrageously improbable adventures; and not only this, but the reader is bored to death with the outrageously improbable adventures of every one with whom little Joseph comes in contact. Good fortune absolutely besets him. Money falls at his feet wherever he goes, and he has only to stoop and pick it up. At length he arrives at the height of prosperity, and thinks he is entirely rid of Furness, when Furness re-appears. That Joseph should, in the end, be brought to trial for the peddler's murder is so clearly the author's design, that he who runs may read it, and we naturally suppose that his persecutor, Furness, is to be the instrument of this evil. We suppose also, of course, that in bringing this misfortune upon our hero, the schoolmaster will involve himself in ruin, in accordance with the common ideas of poetical justice. But no;—Furness, being found in the way, is killed off, accidentally, having lived and plotted to no ostensible purpose, through the better half of the book. Circumstances that have nothing to do with the story involve Joseph in his trial. He refuses to divulge the real secret of the murder, and is sentenced to transportation. The elder Rushbrook, in

the meantime, has avoided suspicion and fallen heir to a great property. Just as his son is about to be sent across the water, some of Joe's friends discover the true state of affairs, and obtain from the father, who is now conveniently upon his death-bed, a confession of his guilt. Thus all ends well—if the word *well* can be applied in any sense to trash so ineffable—the father dies, the son is released, inherits the estate, marries his lady-love, and prospers in every possible and impossible way.

We have mentioned the imitation of Fagin. A second plagiarism is feebly attempted in the character of one Nancy, a trull, who is based upon the Nancy of Oliver Twist—for Marryatt is not often at the trouble of diversifying his thefts. This Nancy changes her name three or four times, and so in fact do each and all of the *dramatis personæ*. This changing of name is one of the bright ideas with which the author of "Peter Simple" is most pertinaciously afflicted. We would not be bound to say how many aliases are borne by the hero in this instance—some dozen perhaps.

The novels of Marryatt—his later ones at least—are evidently written to order, for certain considerations, and have to be delivered within certain periods. He thus finds it his interest to *push on*. Now, for this mode of progress, *incident* is the sole thing which answers. One incident begets another, and so on *ad infinitum*. There is never the slightest necessity for pausing; especially where no plot is to be cared for. *Comment*, in the author's own person, upon what is transacting, is left entirely out of question. There is thus none of that *binding* power perceptible, which often gives a species of unity (the unity of the writer's individual thought) to the most random narrations. All works composed as

we have stated Marryatt's to be composed, will be run on, *incidentally*, in the manner described; and, notwithstanding that it would seem at first sight to be otherwise, yet it is true that no works are so insufferably tedious. These are the novels which we read with a hurry exactly consonant and proportionate with that in which they were indited. We seldom leave them unfinished, yet we labor through to the end, and reach it with unalloyed pleasure.

The *commenting* force can never be safely disregarded. It is far better to have a dearth of incident, with skilful observations upon it, than the utmost variety of event, without. In some previous review we have observed (and our observation is borne out by analysis) that it was the deep sense of the want of this binding and commenting power, in the old Greek drama, which gave rise to the chorus. The chorus came at length to supply, in some measure, a deficiency which is inseparable from dramatic action, and represented the expression of *the public* interest or sympathy in the matters transacted. The successful novelist must, in the same manner, be careful to bring into view his *private* interest, sympathy, and opinion, in regard to his own creations.

We have spoken of "The Poacher" at greater length than we intended; for it deserves little more than an announcement. It has the merit of a homely and not unnatural simplicity of style, and is not destitute of pathos: but this is all. Its English is excessively slovenly. Its events are monstrously improbable. There is no adaptation of parts about it. The truth is, it is a pitiable production. There are twenty young men of our acquaintance who make no pretension to literary ability, yet who could produce a better book *in a week*.

HENRY COCKTON*

"CHARLES O'MALLEY," "Harry Lorrequer," "Valentine Vox," "Stanley Thorn," and some other effusions, are novels depending for effect upon what gave popularity to "Peregrine Pickle"—we mean *practical joke*. To men whose animal spirits are high, whatever may be their mental ability, such works are always acceptable. To the uneducated, to those who read little, to the obtuse in intellect (and these three classes constitute the mass) these books are not only acceptable, but are the only ones which can be called so. We here make two divisions—that of the men who *can* think but who dislike thinking; and that of the men who either have not been presented with the materials for thought, or who have no brains with which to "work-up" the material. With these classes of people "Stanley Thorn" is a favorite. It not only demands no reflection, but repels it, or dissipates it—much as a silver rattle the wrath of a child. It is not in the least degree *suggestive*. Its readers arise from its perusal with the identical idea in possession at sitting down. Yet, *during* perusal, there has been a tingling physico-mental exhilaration, somewhat like that induced by a cold bath, or a flesh-brush, or a gallop on horseback—a very delightful and very healthful matter in its way. But these things are not *letters*. "Valentine Vox," and

* Stanley Thorn. By Henry Cockton, Esq., Author of "Valentine Vox, the Ventriloquist," etc., with Numerous Illustrations, designed by Cruikshank, Leech, etc., and engraved by Yeager. Lea & Blanchard: Philadelphia.

"Charles O'Malley" are no more "*literature*" than cat-gut is music. The visible and tangible tricks of a baboon belong not less to the *belles-lettres* than does "Harry Lorrequer." When this gentleman adorns his countenance with lamp-black, knocks over an apple woman, or brings about a rent in his pantaloons, we laugh at him when bound up in a volume, just as we would laugh at his adventures if happening before our eyes in the street. But mere incidents whether serious or comic, whether occurring or described—*mere incidents* are not books. Neither are they the basis of books—of which the idiosyncrasy is *thought* in contradistinction from *deed*. A book without action cannot be; but a book is only such, to the extent of its thought, independently of its deed. Thus of Algebra; which is, or should be, defined as "a mode of computing with symbols by means of signs." With numbers, as Algebra, it has nothing to do; and although no algebraic computation can proceed without numbers, yet Algebra is only such to the extent of its analysis, independently of its Arithmetic.

We do not mean to *find fault* with the class of performances of which "Stanley Thorn" is one. Whatever tends to the amusement of man tends to his benefit. Aristotle, with singular assurance, has declared poetry the most philosophical of all writing, (*spoudiotaton kai philosophikotaton genos*) defending it principally upon that score. He seems to think—and many following him have thought—that the end of all literature should be instruction—a favorite dogma of the school of Wordsworth. But it is a truism that the end of our existence is happiness. If so, the end of every separate aim of our existence—of everything connected with our existence, should be still—happiness. Therefore, the end of instruc-

tion should be happiness—and happiness, what is it but the extent or duration of pleasure?—therefore, the end of instruction should be pleasure. But the cant of the Lakists would establish the exact converse, and make the end of all pleasure instruction. In fact, *ceteris paribus*, he who pleases is of more importance to his fellow man than he who instructs, since the *dulce* is alone the *utile*, and pleasure is the end already attained, which instruction is merely the means of attaining. It will be said that Wordsworth, with Aristotle, has reference to instruction with eternity in view; but either such cannot be the tendency of his argument, or he is laboring at a sad disadvantage; for his works—or at least those of his school—are professedly to be understood by the few, and it is the many who stand in need of salvation. Thus the moralist's parade of measures would be as completely thrown away as are those of the devil in "Melmoth," who plots and counterplots through three octavo volumes for the entrapment of one or two souls, while any common devil would have demolished one or two thousand.

When, therefore, we assert that these practical-joke publications are not "literature," because not "thoughtful" in any degree, we must not be understood as objecting to the thing in itself, but to its claims upon our attention as critic. Dr. —— what is his name?—strings together a number of facts or fancies which, when printed, answer the laudable purpose of amusing a very large, if not a very respectable number of people. To this proceeding upon the part of the Doctor—or on the part of his imitator, Mr. Jeremy Stockton, the author of "Valentine Vox," we *can* have no objection whatever. His *books* do not please *us*. We will not read them. Still less shall we speak of them seriously as *books*.

Being in no respect works of art, they neither deserve, nor are amenable to criticism.

"Stanley Thorn" may be described, in brief, as a collection, rather than as a series, of practical haps and mishaps, befa ig a young man very badly brought up by his mother. He flogs his father with a codfish, and does other similar things. We have no fault to find with him whatever, except that, in the end, he *does not* come to the gallows.

We have no great fault to find with *him*, but with Mr. Bockton, his father, much. He is a consummate plagiarist; and, in our opinion, nothing more despicable exsts. There is not a *good* incident in his book (?) of which we cannot point out the paternity with at least a sufficient precision. The opening adventures are all *in the style* of "Cyril Thornton." Bob, following Amelia in disguise, is borrowed from one of the Smollet or Fielding novels—there are many of our readers who will be able to say *which*. The cab driven over the Crescent *trottoir*, is from Pierce Egan. The swindling tricks of Colonel Somebody, at the commencement of the novel, and of Captain Filcher afterwards, are from "Pickwick Abroad." The doings at Madame Pompour's (or some such name) with the description of Isabelle, are from "Ecarté, or the Salons of Paris"—a *rich* book. The Sons-of-Glory scene (or its *wraith*) we have seen—*somewhere;* while (not to be tedious) the whole account of Stanley's election, from his first conception of the design, through the entire canvass, the purchasing of the "independents," the row at the hustings, the chairing, the feast, and the petition, is so obviously *stolen* from "Ten Thousand a Year," as to be disgusting. Bob and the "old venerable"—what are they but feeble reflections of young and old Weller? The *tone* of the narration

throughout is an absurd *echo* of Boz. For example—"'We've come agin about them there little accounts of ourn—question is do you mean to settle 'em or don't you?' His colleagues, by whom he was backed, highly approved of this question, and winked and nodded with the view of intimating to each other that in their judgment that was the point." Who so dull as to give Mr. Bogton any more credit for these things than we give the buffoon for the *rôle* which he has committed to memory?

CHARLES DICKENS*

WE often hear it said, of this or of that proposition, that it may be good in theory, but will not answer in practice; and in such assertions we find the substance of all the sneers at critical art which so gracefully curl the upper lips of a tribe which is beneath it. We mean the small geniuses—the literary Titmice—animalculæ which judge of merit solely by *result*, and boast of the solidity, tangibility, and infallibility of the test which they employ. The worth of a work is most accurately estimated, they assure us, by the number of those who peruse it; and "does a book sell?" is a query embodying, in their opinion, all that need be said or sung on the topic of its fitness for sale. We should as soon think of maintaining, in the presence of these creatures, the *dictum* of Anaxagoras, that snow is black, as of disputing, for example, the profundity of that genius which, in a run of five hundred nights, has rendered itself evident in "London Assurance." "What," cry they, "are critical precepts to us, or to anybody? Were we to observe all the critical rules in creation we should still be unable to write a good book"—a point, by the way, which we shall not now pause to deny. "Give us *results*," they vociferate, "for we are plain men of common sense. We contend for fact instead of fancy—for practice in opposition to theory."

* Barnaby Rudge. By Charles Dickens, (Boz.) Author of "The Old Curiosity-Shop," "Pickwick," "Oliver Twist," etc., etc. With numerous Illustrations, by Cattermole, Browne & Sibson. Lea & Blanchard: Philadelphia.

The mistake into which the Titmice have been innocently led, however, is precisely that of dividing the practice which they would uphold, from the theory to which they would object. They should have been told in infancy, and thus prevented from exposing themselves in old age, that theory and practice are in so much *one*, that the former implies or includes the latter. A theory is only good as such, in proportion to its reducibility to practice. If the practice fail, it is because the theory is imperfect. To say what they are in the daily habit of saying—that such or such a matter may be good in theory but is false in practice,—is to perpetrate a bull—to commit a paradox—to state a contradiction in terms—in plain words, to tell a lie *which is a lie at sight* to the understanding of anything bigger than a Titmouse.

But we have no idea, just now, of persecuting the Tittlebats by too close a scrutiny into their little opinions. It is not our purpose, for example, to press them with so grave a weapon as the *argumentum ad absurdum*, or to ask them why, if the popularity of a book be in fact the measure of its worth, we should not be at once in condition to admit the inferiority of "Newton's Principia" to "Hoyle's Games"; of "Earnest Maltravers" to "Jack-the-Giant-Killer," or "Jack Sheppard," or "Jack Brag"; and of "Dick's Christian Philosopher" to "Charlotte Temple," or the "Memoirs of de Grammont," or to one or two dozen other works which must be nameless. Our present design is but to speak, at some length, of a book which in so much concerns the Titmice, that it affords them the very kind of demonstration which they chiefly affect—*practical* demonstration—of the fallacy of one of their favorite dogmas; we mean the dogma that no work of fiction

can fully suit, at the same time, the critical and the popular taste; in fact, that the disregarding or contravening of critical rule is absolutely essential to success, beyond a certain and very limited extent, with the public at large. And if, in the course of our random observations—for we have no space for systematic review—it should appear, incidentally, that the vast popularity of "Barnaby Rudge" must be regarded less as the measure of its value, than as the legitimate and inevitable result of certain well-understood critical propositions reduced by genius into practice, there will appear nothing more than what has before become apparent in the "Vicar of Wakefield" of Goldsmith, or in the "Robinson Crusoe" of De Foe—nothing more, in fact, than what is a truism to all but the Titmice.

Those who know us will not, from what is here premised, suppose it our intention, to enter into any wholesale *laudation* of "Barnaby Rudge." In truth, our design may appear, at a cursory glance, to be very different indeed. Boccalini, in his "Advertisements from Parnassus," tells us that a critic once presented Apollo with a severe censure upon an excellent poem. The god asked him for the beauties of the work. He replied that he only troubled himself about the errors. Apollo presented him with a sack of unwinnowed wheat, and bade him pick out all the chaff for his pains. Now we have not fully made up our minds that the god was in the right. We are not sure that the limit of critical duty is not very generally misapprehended. *Excellence* may be considered an axiom, or a proposition which becomes self-evident just in proportion to the clearness or precision with which it is *put*. If it fairly exists, in this sense, it requires no farther elucidation. It is not excellence if it need to be

demonstrated as such. To point out too particularly the beauties of a work, is to admit, tacitly, that these beauties are not wholly admirable. Regarding, then, excellence as that which is capable of self-manifestation, it but remains for the critic to show when, where, and how it fails in becoming manifest; and, in this showing, it will be the fault of the book itself if what of beauty it contains be not, at least, placed in the fairest light. In a word, we may assume, notwithstanding a vast deal of pitiable cant upon this topic, that in pointing out frankly the errors of a work, we do nearly all that is critically necessary in displaying its merits. In teaching what perfection *is*, how, in fact, shall we more rationally proceed than in specifying what it *is not?*

The plot of "Barnaby Rudge" runs thus: About a hundred years ago, Geoffrey Haredale and John Chester were schoolmates in England—the former being the scape-goat and drudge of the latter. Leaving school, the boys become friends, with much of the old understanding. Haredale loves; Chester deprives him of his mistress. The one cherishes the most deadly hatred; the other merely contemns and avoids. By routes widely different both attain mature age. Haredale, remembering his old love, and still cherishing his old hatred, remains a bachelor and is poor. Chester, among other crimes, is guilty of the seduction and heartless abandonment of a gipsy-girl, who, after the desertion of her lover, gives birth to a son, and, falling into evil courses, is finally hung at Tyburn. The son is received and taken charge of, at an inn called the Maypole, upon the borders of Epping forest, and about twelve miles from London. This inn is kept by one John Willet, a burley-headed and very obtuse little man, who has a son, Joe, and who employs his *protégé*, under the

single name of Hugh, as perpetual hostler at the inn. Hugh's father marries, in the meantime, a rich *parvenue*, who soon dies, but not before having presented Mr. Chester with a boy, Edward. The father, (a thoroughly selfish man-of-the-world, whose model is Chesterfield,) educates this son at a distance, seeing him rarely, and calling him to the paternal residence, at London, only when he has attained the age of twenty-four or five. He, the father, has, long ere this time, spent the fortune brought him by his wife, having been living upon his wits and a small annuity for some eighteen years. The son is recalled chiefly that by marrying an heiress, on the strength of his own personal merit and the reputed wealth of old Chester, he may enable the latter to continue his gayeties in old age. But of this design, as well as of his poverty, Edward is kept in ignorance for some three or four years after his recall; when the father's discovery of what he considers an inexpedient love-entanglement on the part of the son, induces him to disclose the true state of his affairs, as well as the real tenor of his intentions.

Now the love-entanglement of which we speak, is considered inexpedient by Mr. Chester for two reasons—the first of which is, that the lady beloved is the orphan niece of his old enemy, Haredale, and the second is, that Haredale (although in circumstances which have been much and very unexpectedly improved during the preceding twenty-two years) is still insufficiently wealthy to meet the views of Mr. Chester.

We say that, about twenty-two years before the period in question, there came an unlooked-for change in the worldly circumstances of Haredale. This gentleman has an elder brother, Reuben, who has long possessed the family inheritence of the

Haredales, residing at a mansion called "The Warren," not far from the Maypole Inn, which is itself a portion of the estate. Reuben *is a widower*, with one child, a daughter, Emma. Besides this daughter, there are living with him a gardener, a steward (whose name is Rudge) and *two* women servants, one of whom is the wife of Rudge. On the night of the nineteenth of March, 1733, Rudge murders his master for the sake of a large sum of money which he is known to have in possession. During the struggle, Mr. Haredale grasps the cord of an alarm-bell which hangs within his reach, but succeeds in sounding it only once or twice, when it is severed by the knife of the ruffian, who then, completing his bloody business, and securing the money, proceeds to quit the chamber. While doing this, however, he is disconcerted by meeting the gardener, whose pallid countenance evinces suspicion of the deed committed. The murderer is thus forced to kill his fellow servant. Having done so, the idea strikes him of transferring the burden of the crime from himself. He dresses the corpse of the gardener in his own clothes, puts upon its finger his own ring, and in its pocket his own watch—then drags it to a pond in the grounds, and throws it in. He now returns to the house, and, disclosing all to his wife, requests her to become a partner in his flight. Horror-stricken, she falls to the ground. He attempts to raise her. She seizes his wrist, *staining her hand with blood in the attempt.* She renounces him forever; yet promises to conceal the crime. Alone, he flees the country. The next morning, Mr. Haredale being found murdered, and the steward and gardener being both missing, both are suspected. Mrs. Rudge leaves The Warren, and retires to an obscure lodging in London (where she

lives upon an annuity allowed her by Haredale) having given birth, *on the very day after the murder*, to a son, Barnaby Rudge, who proves an idiot, who bears upon his wrist a red mark, and who is born possessed with a maniacal horror of blood.

Some months since the assassination having elapsed, what appears to be the corpse of Rudge is discovered, and the outrage is attributed to the gardener. Yet not universally:—for, as Geoffrey Haredale comes into possession of the estate, there are not wanting suspicions (fomented by Chester) of his own participation in the deed. This taint of suspicion, acting upon his hereditary gloom, together with the natural grief and horror of the atrocity, embitters the whole life of Haredale. He secludes himself at The Warren, and acquires a monomaniac acerbity of temper relieved only by love of his beautiful niece.

Time wears away. Twenty-two years pass by. The niece has ripened in womanhood, and loves young Chester without the knowledge of her uncle or the youth's father. Hugh has grown a stalwart man—the type of man *the animal*, as his father is of man the ultra-civilized. Rudge, the murderer, returns, urged to his undoing by Fate. He appears at the Maypole and inquires stealthily of the circumstances which have occurred at The Warren in his absence. He proceeds to London, discovers the dwelling of his wife, threatens her with the betrayal of her idiot son into vice and extorts from her the bounty of Haredale. Revolting at such appropriation of such means, the widow, with Barnaby, again seeks The Warren, renounces the annuity, and, refusing to assign any reason for her conduct, states her intention of quitting London forever, and of burying herself in some obscure retreat—a retreat which she

begs Haredale not to attempt discovering. When he seeks her in London the next day, she is gone; and there are no tidings, either of herself or of Barnaby; *until the expiration of five years*—which bring the time up to that of the celebrated "No Popery" Riots of Lord George Gordon.

In the meanwhile, and immediately subsequent to the reappearance of Rudge, Haredale and the elder Chester, each heartily desirous of preventing the union of Edward and Emma, have entered into a covenant, the result of which is that, by means of treachery on the part of Chester, permitted on that of Haredale, the lovers misunderstand each other and are estranged. Joe, also, the son of the innkeeper, Willet, having been coquetted with, to too great an extent, by Dolly Varden, (the pretty daughter of one Gabriel Varden, a locksmith of Clerkenwell, London) and having been otherwise maltreated at home, enlists in his Majesty's army and is carried beyond seas, to America; not returning until towards the close of the riots. Just before their commencement, Rudge, in a midnight prowl about the scene of his atrocity, is encountered by an individual who had been familiar with him in earlier life, while living at The Warren. This individual, terrified at what he supposes, very naturally, to be the ghost of the murdered Rudge, relates his adventure to his companions at the Maypole, and John Willet conveys the intelligence, forthwith, to Mr. Haredale. Connecting the apparition, in his own mind, with the peculiar conduct of Mrs. Rudge, this gentleman imbibes a suspicion, at once, of the true state of affairs. This suspicion (which he mentions to no one) is, moreover, very strongly confirmed by an occurrence happening to Varden, the locksmith, who, visiting the woman late one night, finds her in

communion of a nature apparently most confidential, with a ruffian whom the locksmith knows to be such, without knowing the man himself. Upon an attempt, on the part of Varden, to seize this ruffian, he is thwarted by Mrs. R.; and upon Haredale's inquiring minutely into the personal appearance of the man, he is found to accord with Rudge. We have already shown that the ruffian was in fact Rudge himself. Acting upon the suspicion thus aroused, Haredale watches, by night, alone, in the deserted house formerly occupied by Mrs. R. in hope of here coming upon the murderer, and makes other exertions with the view of arresting him; but all in vain.

It is, also, at the conclusion *of the five years*, that the hitherto uninvaded retreat of Mrs. Rudge is disturbed by a message from her husband, demanding money. He has discovered her abode by accident. Giving him what she has at the time, she afterwards eludes him, and hastens, with Barnaby, to bury herself in the crowd of London, until she can find opportunity again to seek retreat in some more distant region of England. But the riots have now begun. The idiot is beguiled into joining the mob, and, becoming separated from his mother (who, growing ill through grief, is borne to a hospital) meets with his old playmate Hugh, and becomes with him a ringleader in the rebellion.

The riots proceed. A conspicuous part is borne in them by one Simon Tappertit, a fantastic and conceited little apprentice of Varden's, and a sworn enemy to Ioe Willet, who has rivalled him in the affection of Dolly. A hangman, Dennis, is also very busy amid the mob. Lord George Gordon, and his secretary, Gashford, with John Grueby, his servant, appear, of course, upon the scene.

Old Chester, who, during the five years, has become Sir John, instigates Gashford, who has received personal insult from Haredale, (a catholic and consequently obnoxious to the mob) instigates Gashford to procure the burning of The Warren, and to abduct Emma during the excitement ensuing. The mansion is burned, (Hugh, who also fancies himself wronged by Haredale, being chief actor in the outrage) and Miss H. carried off, in company with Dolly, who had long lived with her, and whom Tappertit abducts upon his own responsibility. Rudge, in the meantime, finding the eye of Haredale upon him, (since he has become aware of the watch kept nightly at his wife's) goaded by the dread of solitude, and fancying that his sole chance of safety lies in joining the rioters, hurries upon their track to the doomed Warren. He arrives too late—the mob have departed. Skulking about the ruins, he is discovered by Haredale, and finally captured without a struggle, within the glowing walls of the very chamber in which the deed was committed. He is conveyed to prison, where he meets and recognizes Barnaby, who had been captured as a rioter. The mob assail and burn the jail. The father and son escape. Betrayed by Dennis, both are again retaken, and Hugh shares their fate. In Newgate, Dennis, through accident, discovers the parentage of Hugh, and an effort is made in vain to interest Chester in behalf of his son. Finally, Varden procures the pardon of Barnaby; but Hugh, Rudge, and Dennis, are hung. At the eleventh hour, Joe returns from abroad with one arm. In company with Edward Chester, he performs prodigies of valor (during the last riots) on behalf of the government. The two, with Haredale and Varden, rescue Emma and Dolly. A double marriage, of course, takes place; for Dolly

has repented her fine airs, and the prejudices of Haredale are overcome. Having killed Chester in a duel, he quits England forever, and ends his days in the seclusion of an Italian convent. Thus, after summary disposal of the understrappers, ends the drama of "Barnaby Rudge."

We have given, as may well be supposed, but a very meagre outline of the story, and we have given it in the simple or natural sequence. That is to say, we have related the events, as nearly as might be, in the order of their occurrence. But this order would by no means have suited the purpose of the novelist, whose design has been to maintain the secret of the murder, and the consequent mystery which encircles Rudge, and the actions of his wife, until the catastrophe of his discovery by Haredale. The *thesis* of the novel may thus be regarded as based upon curiosity. Every point is so arranged as to perplex the reader, and whet his desire for elucidation:—for example, the first appearance of Rudge at the Maypole; his questions; his persecution of Mrs. R.; the ghost seen by the frequenter of the Maypole; and Haredale's impressive conduct in consequence. What *we* have told, in the very beginning of our digest, in regard to the shifting of the gardener's dress, is sedulously kept from the reader's knowledge until he learns it from Rudge's own confession in jail. We say sedulously; for, *the intention once known*, the *traces* of the design can be found upon every page. There is an amusing and exceedingly ingenious instance at page 145, where Solomon Daisy describes his adventure with the ghost.

"It was a ghost—a spirit," cried Daisy.

"Whose?" they all three asked together.

In the excess of his emotion (for he fell back trembling in his chair and waved his hand as if entreating them to

question him no farther) *his answer was lost upon all* but old John Willet, who happened to be seated close beside him.

"Who!" cried Parkes and Tom Cobb—"Who was it?"

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Willet, after a long pause, "you needn't ask. The likeness of a murdered man. This is the nineteenth of March."

A profound silence ensued.

The impression here skilfully conveyed is, that the ghost seen is that of Reuben Haredale; and the mind of the not-too-acute reader is at once averted from the true state of the case—from the murderer, Rudge, living in the body.

Now there can be no question that, by such means as these, many points which are comparatively insipid in the natural sequence of our digest, and which would have been comparatively insipid even if given in full detail in a natural sequence, are endued with the interest of mystery; but neither can it be denied that a vast many more points are at the same time deprived of all effect, and become null, through the impossibility of comprehending them without the key. The author, who, cognizant of his plot, writes with this cognizance continually operating upon him, and thus *writes to himself* in spite of himself, does not, of course, feel that much of what is effective to his own informed perception, must necessarily be lost upon his uninformed readers; and he himself is never in condition, as regards his own work, to bring the matter to test. But the reader may easily satisfy himself of the validity of our objection. Let him *re-peruse* "Barnaby Rudge," and with a pre-comprehension of the mystery, these points of which we speak break out in all directions like stars, and throw quadruple brilliance over the narrative—a brilliance which a correct taste will at

once declare unprofitably sacrificed at the shrine of the keenest interest of mere mystery.

The design of *mystery*, however, being once determined upon by an author, it becomes imperative, first, that no undue or inartistical means be employed to conceal the secret of the plot; and, secondly, that the secret be well kept. Now, when, at page 16, we read that "the body of *poor Mr. Rudge, the steward, was found*" months after the outrage, &c., we see that Mr. Dickens has been guilty of no misdemeanor against Art in stating what was not the fact; since the falsehood is put into the mouth of Solomon Daisy, and given merely as the impression of this individual and of the public. The writer has not asserted it in his own person, but ingeniously conveyed an idea (false in itself, yet a belief in which is necessary for the effect of the tale) by the mouth of one of his characters. The case is different, however, when Mrs. Rudge is repeatedly denominated "the widow." It is the author who, himself, frequently so terms her. This is disingenuous and inartistical: accidentally so, of course. We speak of the matter merely by way of illustrating our point, and as an oversight on the part of Mr. Dickens.

That the secret be well kept is obviously necessary. A failure to preserve it until the proper moment of *dénouement*, throws all into confusion, so far as regards the *effect* intended. If the mystery leak out, against the author's will, his purposes are immediately at odds and ends; for he proceeds upon the supposition that certain impressions *do* exist, which do *not* exist, in the mind of his readers. We are not prepared to say, so positively as we could wish, whether, by the public at large, the whole *mystery* of the murder committed by Rudge, with the identity

of the Maypole ruffian with Rudge himself, was fathomed at any period previous to the period intended, or, if so, whether at a period so early as materially to interfere with the interest designed; but we are forced, through sheer modesty, to suppose this the case; since, by ourselves individually, the secret was distinctly understood immediately upon the perusal of the story of Solomon Daisy, which occurs at the seventh page of this volume of three hundred and twenty-three. In the number of the "Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post," for May the first, 1841, (the tale having then only begun) will be found a *prospective notice* of some length, in which we made use of the following words:

That Barnaby is the son of the murderer may not appear evident to our readers—but we will explain. The person murdered is Mr. Reuben Haredale. He was found assassinated in his bed-chamber. His steward, (Mr. Rudge, senior,) and his gardener (name not mentioned) are missing. At first both are suspected. "Some months afterward"—here we use the words of the story—"the steward's body, scarcely to be recognized but by his clothes, and the watch and ring he wore—was found at the bottom of a piece of water in the grounds, with a deep gash in the breast, where he had been stabbed by a knife. He was only partly dressed; and all people agreed that he had been sitting up reading in his own room, where there were many traces of blood, and was suddenly fallen upon and killed, before his master."

Now, be it observed, it is not the author himself who asserts that *the steward's body was found;* he has put the words in the mouth of one of his characters. His design is to make it appear, in the *dénouement*, that the steward, Rudge, first murdered the gardener, then went to his master's chamber, murdered *him*, was interrupted by his (Rudge's) wife, whom he seized and held *by the wrist*, to prevent her giving the alarm—that he then, after possessing himself of the booty desired, returned to the gardener's room, exchanged clothes with him, put upon the corpse his own

watch and ring, and secreted it where it was afterwards discovered at so late a period that the features could not be identified.

The differences between our preconceived ideas, as here stated, and the actual facts of the story, will be found immaterial. The gardener was murdered, not before but after his master, and that Rudge's wife seized *him* by the wrist, instead of his seizing *her*, has so much the air of mistake on the part of Mr. Dickens, that we can scarcely speak of our own version as erroneous. The grasp of a murderer's bloody hand on the wrist of a woman *enciente*, would have been more likely to produce the effect described (and this every one will allow) than the grasp of the hand of the woman upon the wrist of the assassin. We may therefore say of our supposition as Talleyrand said of some cockney's bad French—*que s'il ne soit pas Français, assurément donc il le doit être*—that if we did not rightly prophecy, yet, at least, our prophecy *should have been* right.

We are informed in the Preface to "Barnaby Rudge" that "no account of the Gordon Riots having been introduced into any work of fiction, and the subject presenting very extraordinary and remarkable features," our author "was led to project this tale." But for this distinct announcement (for Mr. Dickens can scarcely have deceived himself) we should have looked upon the riots as altogether an afterthought. It is evident that they have no necessary connexion with the story. In our digest, which carefully includes all *essentials* of the plot, we have dismissed the doings of the mob in a paragraph. The whole event or the drama would have proceeded as well without as with them. They have even the appearance of being *forcibly* introduced.

In our compendium above, it will be seen that we emphasized several allusions to an interval of *five years*. The action is brought up to a certain point. The train of events is, so far, uninterrupted—nor is there any apparent need of interruption—yet all characters are now thrown forward for a period of *five years*. And why? We ask in vain. It is not to bestow upon the lovers a more decorous maturity of age—for this is the only possible idea which suggests itself—Edward Chester is already eight-and-twenty, and Emma Haredale would, in America at least, be upon the list of old maids. No—there is no such reason; nor does there appear to be any one more plausible than that, as it is now the year of our Lord 1775, an advance of five years will bring the *dramatis personæ* up to a very remarkable period, affording an admirable opportunity for their display —the period, in short, of the "No Popery" riots. This was the idea with which we were forcibly impressed in perusal, and which nothing less than Mr. Dickens' positive assurance to the contrary would have been sufficient to eradicate.

It is, perhaps, but one of a thousand instances of the disadvantages, both to the author and the public, of the present absurd fashion of periodical novel-writing, that our author had not sufficiently considered or determined upon *any* particular plot when he began the story now under review. In fact, we see, or fancy that we see, numerous traces of indecision—traces which a dexterous supervision of the complete work might have enabled him to erase. We have already spoken of the intermission of a lustrum. The opening speeches of old Chester are by far too *truly* gentlemanly for his subsequent character. The wife of Varden, also, is too wholesale a shrew to be converted into the quiet wife—the original design was

to punish her. At page 16, we read thus—Solomon Daisy is telling his story:

"I put as good a face upon it as I could, and muffling myself up, started out with a lighted lantern in one hand and the key of the church in the other"—at this point of the narrative, the dress of the strange man rustled as if he had turned to hear more distinctly.

Here the design is to call the reader's attention to a *point* in the tale; but no subsequent explanation is made. Again, in a few lines below—

The houses were all shut up, and the folks in doors, and perhaps there is only one man in the world who knows how dark it really was.

Here the intention is still more evident, but there is no result. Again, at page 54, the idiot draws Mr. Chester to the window, and directs his attention to the cloths hanging upon the lines in the yard—

"Look down," he said softly; "do you mark how they whisper in each other's ears, then dance and leap to make believe they are in sport? Do you see how they stop for a moment, when they think there is no one looking, and mutter among themselves again; and then how they roll and gambol, delighted with the mischief they've been plotting? Look at 'em now! See how they whirl and plunge. And now they stop again, and whisper cautiously together—little thinking, mind, how often I have lain upon the ground and watched them. I say—what is it that they plot and hatch? Do you know?"

Upon perusal of these ravings, we at once supposed them to have allusion to some *real* plotting; and even now we cannot force ourselves to believe them not so intended. They suggested the opinion that Haredale himself would be implicated in the murder, and that the counsellings alluded to might be those of that gentleman with Rudge. It is by no means impossible that some such conception wavered in

the mind of the author. At page 32 we have a confirmation of our idea, when Varden endeavors to arrest the murderer in the house of his wife—

"Come back—come back!" exclaims the woman, wrestling with and clasping him. "Do not touch him on your life. *He carries other lives beside his own.*"

The *dénouement* fails to account for this exclamation.

In the beginning of the story much emphasis is placed upon the *two* female servants of Haredale, and upon his journey to and from London, as well as upon his wife. We have merely said, in our digest, that he was a widower, italicizing the remark. All these other points are, in fact, singularly irrelevant, in the supposition that the original design has not undergone modification.

Again, at page 57, when Haredale talks of "his dismantled and beggared hearth" we cannot help fancying that the author had in view some different wrong, or series of wrongs, perpetrated by Chester, than any which appear in the end. This gentleman, too, takes extreme and frequent pains to acquire dominion over the rough Hugh—this matter is particularly insisted upon by the novelist—we look, of course, for some important result—but the filching of a letter is nearly all that is accomplished. That Barnaby's delight in the desperate scenes of the rebellion, is inconsistent with his horror of blood, will strike every reader; and this inconsistency seems to be the consequence of the *after-thought* upon which we have already commented. In fact, the title of the work, the elaborate and pointed manner of the commencement, the impressive description of The Warren, and especially of Mrs. Rudge, go far to show that Mr. Dickens has really

deceived himself—that the soul of the plot, as originally conceived, was the murder of Haredale, with the subsequent discovery of the murderer in Rudge—but that this idea was afterwards abandoned, or rather suffered to be merged in that of the Popish riots. The result has been most unfavorable. That which, of itself, would have proved highly effective, has been rendered nearly null by its situation. In the multitudinous outrage and horror of the Rebellion, the *one* atrocity is utterly whelmed and extinguished.

The reasons of this deflection from the first purpose appear to us self-evident. One of them we have already mentioned. The other is that our author discovered, when too late, that *he had anticipated, and thus rendered valueless, his chief effect.* This will be readily understood. The particulars of the assassination being withheld, the strength of the narrator is put forth, in the beginning of the story, to *whet curiosity* in respect to these particulars; and, so far, he is but in proper pursuance of his main design. But from this intention he unwittingly passes into the error of *exaggerating anticipation.* And error though it be, it is an error wrought with consummate skill. What, for example, could more vividly enhance our impression of the unknown horror enacted, than the deep and enduring gloom of Haredale—than the idiot's inborn awe of blood—or, especially, than the expression of countenance so imaginatively attributed to Mrs. Rudge—"the capacity for expressing terror—something only dimly seen, but never absent for a moment—the shadow of some look to which an instant of intense and most unutterable horror only could have given rise?" But it is a condition of the human fancy that the promises of such words are irredeemable. In the

notice before mentioned we thus spoke upon this topic:

> This is a conception admirably adapted to whet curiosity in respect to the character of that event which is hinted at as forming the basis of the story. But this observation should not fail to be made—that the anticipation must surpass the reality; that no matter how terrific be the circumstances which, in the *dénouement*, shall appear to have occasioned the expression of countenance worn habitually by Mrs. Rudge, still they will not be able to satisfy the mind of the reader. He will surely be disappointed. The skilful intimation of horror held out by the artist, produces an effect which will deprive his conclusion of all. These intimations—these dark hints of some uncertain evil—are often rhetorically praised as effective—but are only justly so praised where there is *no dénouement* whatever—where the reader's imagination is left to clear up the mystery for itself—and this is not the design of Mr. Dickens.

And, in fact, our author was not long in seeing his precipitancy. He had placed himself in a dilemma from which even his high genius could not extricate him. He at once shifts the main interest—and in truth we do not see what better he could have done. The reader's attention becomes absorbed in the riots, and he fails to observe that what should have been the true catastrophe of the novel, is exceedingly feeble and ineffective.

A few cursory remarks:—Mr. Dickens fails peculiarly in *pure* narration. See, for example, page 296, where the connexion of Hugh and Chester is detailed by Varden. See also in "The Curiosity Shop," where, when the result is fully known, so many words are occupied in explaining the relationship of the brothers. The effect of the present narrative might have been materially increased by confining the action within the limits of London. The "Notre Dâme" of Hugo affords a fine example of the force

which can be gained by concentration, or unity of place. The unity of time is also sadly neglected, to no purpose, in "Barnaby Rudge." That Rudge should so long and so deeply feel the sting of conscience is inconsistent with his brutality. On page 15, the interval elapsing between the murder and Rudge's return, is variously stated at twenty-two and twenty-four years. It may be asked why the inmates of "The Warren" failed to hear the alarm-bell which was heard by Solomon Daisy. The idea of persecution by being tracked, as by blood-hounds, from one spot of quietude to another, is a favorite one with Mr. Dickens. Its effect cannot be denied. The stain upon Barnaby's wrist, caused by fright in the mother at so late a period of gestation as one day before mature parturition, is shockingly at war with all medical experience. When Rudge, escaped from prison, unshackled, with money at command, is in agony at his wife's refusal to perjure herself for his salvation—is it not *queer* that he should demand any other salvation than lay in his heels?

Some of the conclusions of chapters—see pages 40 and 100—seem to have been written for the mere purpose of illustrating tail-pieces.

The leading idiosyncrasy of Mr. Dickens' remarkable humor, is to be found in his *translating the language of gesture, or action, or tone.* For example—

> The cronies nodded to each other, and Mr. Parkes remarked in an under tone, shaking his head meanwhile, *as who should say "let no man contradict me, for I won't believe him,"* that Willet was in amazing force to-night.

The riots form a series of vivid pictures never surpassed. At page 17, the road between London and the Maypole is described as a horribly rough and dangerous, and at page 97, as an uncommonly

smooth and convenient one. At page 116, how comes Chester in possession of the key of Mrs. Rudge's vacated house?

Mr. Dickens' English is usually pure. His most remarkable error is that of employing the adverb "directly" in the sense of "as soon as." For example—"Directly he arrived, Rudge said," &c. Bulwer is uniformly guilty of the same blunder.

It is observable that so original a stylist as our author should occasionally lapse into a gross imitation of what, itself, is a gross imitation. We mean the manner of Lamb—a manner based in the Latin construction. For example—

> In summer time its pumps suggest to thirty idlers springs cooler and more sparkling and deeper than other wells; and as they trace the spillings of full pitchers on the heated ground, they snuff the freshness, and, sighing, cast sad looks towards the Thames, and think of baths and boats, and saunter on, despondent.

The wood-cut *designs* which accompany the edition before us are occasionally good. The copper engravings are pitiably ill-conceived and ill-drawn; and not only this, but are in broad contradiction of the wood-designs and text.

There are many *coincidences* wrought into the narrative—those, for example, which relate to the nineteenth of March; the dream of Barnaby, respecting his father, at the very period when his father is actually in the house; and the dream of Haredale previous to his final meeting with Chester. These things are meant to *insinuate* a fatality which, very properly, is not expressed in plain terms—but it is questionable whether the story derives more in ideality from their introduction, than it might have gained of verisimilitude from their omission.

The *ramatis personæ* sustain the high fame of

Mr. Dickens as a delineator of character. Miggs, the disconsolate handmaiden of Varden; Tappertit, his chivalrous apprentice; Mrs. Varden, herself; and Dennis, a hangman—may be regarded as original caricatures, of the highest merit as such. Their traits are founded in acute observation of nature, but are exaggerated to the utmost admissible extent. Miss Haredale and Edward Chester are commonplaces—no effort has been made in their behalf. Joe Willet is a naturally drawn country youth. Stagg is a mere make-weight. Gashford and Gordon are truthfully copied. Dolly Varden is truth itself. Haredale, Rudge and Mrs. Rudge, are impressive only through the circumstances which surround them. Sir John Chester, is, of course, not original, but is a vast improvement upon all his predecessors—his heartlessness is rendered somewhat too amusing, and his end too much that of a man of honor. Hugh is a noble conception. His fierce exultation in his animal powers; his subserviency to the smooth Chester; his mirthful contempt and patronage of Tappertit, and his *brutal* yet firm courage in the hour of death—form a picture to be set in diamonds. Old Willet is not surpassed by any character even among those of Dickens. He is nature itself—yet a step farther would have placed him in the class of caricatures. His combined conceit and obtusity are indescribably droll, and his peculiar misdirected energy when aroused, is one of the most exquisite touches in all humorous painting. We shall never forget how heartily we laughed at his shaking Solomon Daisy and threatening to put him behind the fire, because the unfortunate little man was too much frightened to articulate. Varden is one of those free, jovial honest fellows, at charity with all mankind, whom our author is so fond of depicting.

And lastly, Barnaby, the hero of the tale—in him we have been somewhat disappointed. We have already said that his delight in the atrocities of the Rebellion is at variance with his horror of blood. But this horror of blood is *inconsequential;* and of this we complain. Strongly insisted upon in the beginning of the narrative, it produces no adequate result. And here how fine an opportunity has Mr. Dickens missed! The conviction of the assassin, after the lapse of twenty-two years, might easily have been brought about through his son's mysterious awe of blood—*an awe created in the unborn by the assassination itself*—and this would have been one of the finest possible embodiments of the idea which we are accustomed to attach to "poetical justice." The raven, too, intensely amusing as it is, might have been made, more than we now see it, a portion of the conception of the fantastic Barnaby. Its croakings might have been *prophetically* heard in the course of the drama. Its character might have performed, in regard to that of the idiot, much the same part as does, in music, the accompaniment in respect to the air. Each might have been distinct. Each might have differed remarkably from the other. Yet between them there might have been wrought an analogical resemblance, and although each might have existed apart, they might have formed together a whole which would have been imperfect in the absence of either.

From what we have here said—and, perhaps, said without due deliberation—(for alas! the hurried duties of the journalist preclude it)—there will not be wanting those who will accuse us of a mad design to detract from the pure fame of the novelist. But to such we merely say in the language of heraldry "ye should wear a plain point sanguine in your arms.'

If this be understood, well; if not, well again. There lives no man feeling a deeper reverence for genius than ourself. If we have not dwelt so especially upon the high merits as upon the trivial defects of "Barnaby Rudge" we have already given our reasons for the omission, and these reasons will be sufficiently understood by all whom we care to understand them. The work before us is not, we think, equal to the tale which immediately preceded it; but there are few—very few others to which we consider it inferior. Our chief objection has not, perhaps, been so distinctly stated as we could wish. That this fiction, or indeed that any fiction written by Mr. Dickens, should be based in the excitement and maintenance of curiosity we look upon as a misconception, on the part of the writer, of his own very great yet very peculiar powers. He has done this thing well, to be sure—he would do anything well in comparison with the herd of his contemporaries—but he has not done it so thoroughly well as his high and just reputation would demand. We think that the whole book has been an effort to him—solely through the nature of its design. He has been smitten with an untimely desire for a novel path. The idiosyncrasy of his intellect would lead him, naturally, into the most fluent and simple style of narration. In tales of ordinary sequence he may and will long reign triumphant. He has a *talent* for all things, but no positive *genius* for *adaptation*, and still less for that metaphysical art in which the souls of all *mysteries* lie. "Caleb Williams" is a far less noble work than "The Old Curiosity Shop"; but Mr. Dickens could no more have constructed the one than Mr. Godwin could have dreamed of the other.

MARGINALIA

IN getting my books, I have been always solicitous of an ample margin; this not so much through any love of the thing in itself, however agreeable, as for the facility it affords me of penciling suggested thoughts, agreements, and differences of opinion, or brief critical comments in general. Where what I have to note is too much to be included within the narrow limits of a margin, I commit it to a slip of paper, and deposit it between the leaves; taking care to secure it by an imperceptible portion of gum tragacanth paste.

All this may be whim; it may be not only a very hackneyed, but a very idle practice:—yet I persist in it still; and it affords me pleasure; which is profit, in despite of Mr. Bentham with Mr. Mill on his back.

This making of notes, however, is by no means the making of mere *memoranda*—a custom which has its disadvantages, beyond doubt. "*Ce que je mets sur papier.*" says Bernardin de St. Pierre, "*je remets de ma mémoire, et par consequence je l'oublie;*" —and, in fact, if you wish to forget anything on the spot, make a note that this thing is to be remembered.

But the purely marginal jottings, done with no eye to the Memorandum Book, have a distinct complexion, and not only a distinct purpose, but none at all; this it is which imparts to them a value. They have a rank somewhat above the chance and desultory comments of literary chit-chat—for these latter are not unfrequently "talk for talk's sake," hurried out of the mouth; while the *marginalia* are

deliberately penciled, because the mind of the reader wishes to unburthen itself of a *thought*—however flippant—however silly—however trivial—still a thought indeed, not merely a thing that might have been a thought in time, and under more favorable circumstances. In the *marginalia*, too, we talk only to ourselves; we therefore talk freshly—boldly—originally—with *abandonnement*—without conceit—much after the fashion of Jeremy Taylor, and Sir Thomas Browne, and Sir William Temple, and the anatomical Burton, and that most logical analogist, Butler, and some other people of the old day, who were too full of their matter to have any room for their manner, which being thus left out of question, was a capital manner, indeed—a model of manners, with a richly marginalic air.

The circumscription of space, too, in these pencilings, has in it something more of advantage than inconvenience. It compels us (whatever diffuseness of idea we may clandestinel [7] entertain) into Montesquieu-ism, into Tacitus-ism, (here I leave out of view the concluding portion of the "Annals,")—or even into Carlyle-ism—a thing which, I have been told, is not to be confounded with your ordinary affectation and bad grammar. I say "bad grammar," through sheer obstinacy, because the grammarians (who should know better) insist upon it that I should not. But then grammar is not what these grammarians will have it; and, being merely the analysis of language, with the result of this analysis, must be good or bad just as the analyst is sage or silly—just as he is a Horne Tooke or a Cobbett.

But to our sheep. During a rainy afternoon, not long ago, being in a mood too listless for continuous study, I sought relief from *ennui* in dipping here and there, at random, among the volumes of my library—

no very large one, certainly, but sufficiently miscellaneous; and, I flatter myself, not a little *recherché*.

Perhaps it was what the Germans call the "brain-scattering" humour of the moment; but, while the picturesqueness of the numerous pencil-scratches arrested my attention, their helter-skelterness of commentary amused me. I found myself, at length, forming a wish that it had been some other hand than my own which had so bedevilled the books, and fancying that, in such case, I might have derived no inconsiderable pleasure from turning them over. From this the transition-thought (as Mr. Lyell, or Mr. Murchison, or Mr. Featherstonhaugh would have it) was natural enough:—there might be something even in *my* scribblings which, for the mere sake of scribbling, would have interest for others.

The main difficulty respected the mode of transferring the notes from the volumes—the context from the text—without detriment to that exceedingly frail fabric of intelligibility in which the context was imbedded. With all appliances to boot, with the printed pages at their back, the commentaries were too often like Dodona's oracles—or those of Lycophron Tenebrosus—or the essays of the pedant's pupils, in Quintillian, which were "necessarily excellent, since even he (the pedant) found it impossible to comprehend them":—what, then, would become of it—this context—if transferred?—if translated? Would it not rather be *traduit* (traduced) which is the French synonyme, or *overzezet* (turned topsy-turvy) which is the Dutch one?

I concluded, at length, to put extensive faith in the acumen and imagination of the reader:—this as a general rule. But, in some instances, where even faith would not remove mountains, there seemed no safer plan than so to re-model the note as to con-

vey at least the ghost of a conception as to what it was all about. Where, for such conception, the text itself was absolutely necessary, I could quote it; where the title of the book commented upon was indispensable, I could name it. In short, like a novel-hero dilemma'd, I made up my mind "to be guided by circumstances," in default of more satisfactory rules of conduct.

As for the multitudinous opinion expressed in the subjoined *farrago*—as for my present assent to all, or dissent from any portion of it—as to the possibility of my having, in some instances, altered my mind—or as to the impossibility of my not having altered it often—these are points upon which I say nothing, because upon these there can be nothing cleverly said. It may be as well to observe, however, that just as the goodness of your true pun is in the direct ratio of its intolerability, so is nonsense the essential sense of the Marginal Note.

I.

One of the happiest examples, in a small way, of the carrying-one's-self-in-a-hand-basket logic, is to be found in a London weekly paper, called "The Popular Record of Modern Science; a Journal of Philosophy and General Information." This work has a vast circulation, and is respected by eminent men. Sometime in November, 1845, it copied from the "Columbian Magazine," of New York, a rather adventurous article of mine, called "Mesmeric Revelation." It had the impudence, also, to spoil the title by improving it to "The Last Conversation of a Somnambule"—a phrase that is nothing at all to the purpose, since the person who "converses" is *not* a somnambule. He is a sleep-waker—*not* a

sleep-walker; but I presume that "The Record" thought it was only the difference of an *l*. What I chiefly complain of, however, is that the London editor prefaced my paper with these words:—"The following is an article communicated to the Columbian Magazine, a journal of respectability and influence in the United States, by Mr. Edgar A. Poe. *It bears internal evidence of authenticity.*"! There is no subject under heaven about which funnier ideas are, in general, entertained than about this subject of internal evidence. It is by "internal evidence," observe, that we decide upon the mind. But to "The Record":—On the issue of my "Valdemar Case," this journal copies it, as a matter of course, and (also as a matter of course) improves the title, as in the previous instance. But the editorial comments may as well be called profound. Here they are:

The following narrative appears in a recent number of *The American Magazine*, a respectable periodical in the United States. It comes, it will be observed, from the narrator of the "Last Conversation of a Somnambule," published in The Record of the 29th of November. In extracting this case the *Morning Post*, of Monday last, takes what it considers the safe side, by remarking—"For our own parts we do not believe it; and there are several statements made, more especially with regard to the disease of which the patient died, which at once prove the case to be either a fabrication, or the work of one little acquainted with consumption. The story, however, is wonderful, and we therefore give it." The editor, however, does not point out the especial statements which are inconsistent with what we know of the progress of consumption, and as few scientific persons would be willing to take their pathology any more than their logic from the *Morning Post*, his caution, it is to be feared, will not have much weight. The reason assigned by the Post for publishing the account is quaint, and would apply equally to an adventure from Baron Munchausen:—"it is wonderful and we therefore give

it." . . . The above case is obviously one that cannot be received except on the strongest testimony, and it is equally clear that the testimony by which it is at present accompanied, is not of that character. The most favorable circumstances in support of it, consist in the fact that credence is understood to be given to it at New York, within a few miles of which city the affair took place, and where consequently the most ready means must be found for its authentication or disproval. The initials of the medical men and of the young medical student must be sufficient in the immediate locality, to establish their identity, especially as M. Valdemar was well known, and had been so long ill as to render it out of the question that there should be any difficulty in ascertaining the names of the physicians by whom he had been attended. In the same way the nurses and servants under whose cognizance the case must have come during the seven months which it occupied, are of course accessible to all sorts of inquiries. It will, therefore, appear that there must have been too many parties concerned to render prolonged deception practicable. The angry excitement and various rumors which have at length rendered a public statement necessary, are also sufficient to show that *something* extraordinary must have taken place. On the other hand there is no strong point for disbelief. The circumstances are, as the Post says, "wonderful"; but so are all circumstances that come to our knowledge for the first time—and in Mesmerism everything is new. An objection may be made that the article has rather a Magazinish air; Mr. Poe having evidently written with a view to effect, and so as to excite rather than to subdue the vague appetite for the mysterious and the horrible which such a case, under any circumstances, is sure to awaken—but apart from this there is nothing to deter a philosophic mind from further inquiries regarding it. It is a matter entirely for testimony. [So it is.] Under this view we shall take steps to procure from some of the most intelligent and influential citizens of New York all evidence that can be had upon the subject. No steamer will leave England for America till the 3d of February, but within a few weeks of that time we doubt not it will be possible to lay before the readers of the *Record* information which will enable them to come to a pretty accurate conclusion.

Yes; and no doubt they came to one accurate enough, in the end. But all this rigmarole is what people call testing a thing by "internal evidence." The *Record* insists upon the truth of the story because of certain facts—because "the initials of the young men *must* be sufficient to establish their identity"—because "the nurses *must* be accessible to all sorts of inquiries"—and because the "angry excitement and various rumors which at length rendered a public statement necessary, are sufficient to show that *something* extraordinary *must* have taken place." To be sure! The story is proved by these facts—the facts about the students, the nurses, the excitement, the credence given the tale at New York. And now all we have to do is to prove these facts. Ah!—*they* are proved *by the story*. As for the *Morning Post*, it evinces more weakness in its disbelief than the *Record* in its credulity. What the former says about doubting on account of inaccuracy in the detail of the phthisical symptoms, is a mere *fetch*, as the Cockneys have it, in order to make a very few little children believe that it, the Post, is not quite so stupid as a post proverbially is. It knows nearly as much about pathology as it does about English grammar—and I really hope it will not feel called upon to blush at the compliment. I represented the symptoms of M. Valdemar as "severe," to be sure. I put an extreme case; for it was necessary that I should leave on the reader's mind no doubt as to the certainty of death without the aid of the Mesmerist—but such symptoms *might* have appeared—the identical symptoms *have appeared*, and will be presented again and again. Had the Post been only half as honest as ignorant, it would have owned that it disbelieved for no reason more profound than that which in-

fluences all dunces in disbelieving—it would have owned that it doubted the thing merely because the thing was a "wonderful" thing, and had never yet been printed in a book.

II.

We were men of the world, with no principle—a very old fashioned and cumbersome thing—should be on our guard lest, fancying him on his last legs, we insult, or otherwise maltreat some poor devil of a genius at the very instant of his putting his foot on the top round of his ladder of triumph. It is a common trick with these fellows, when on the point of attaining some long-cherished end, to sink themselves into the deepest possible abyss of seeming despair, for no other purpose than that of increasing the space of success through which they have made up their minds immediately to soar.

III.

Mr. Hudson, among innumerable blunders, attributes to Sir Thomas Brown, the paradox of Tertullian in his *De Carne Christi*—"*Mortuus est Dei filus, credible est quia ineptum est; et sepultus resurrexit, certum est quia impossibile est.*"

IV.

After reading all that has been written, and after thinking all that can be thought, on the topics of God and the soul, the man who has a right to say that he thinks at all, will find himself face to face with the conclusion that, on these topics, the most profound thought is that which can be the least easily distinguished from the most superficial sentiment.

V.

That punctuation is important all agree; but how few comprehend the extent of its importance! The writer who neglects punctuation, or mis-punctuates, is liable to be misunderstood—this, according to the popular idea, is the sum of the evils arising from heedlessness or ignorance. It does not seem to be known that, even where the sense is perfectly clear, a sentence may be deprived of half its force—its spirit—its point—by improper punctuations. For the want of merely a comma, it often occurs that an axiom appears a paradox, or that a sarcasm is converted into a sermonoid. There is *no* treatise on the topic—and there is no topic on which a treatise is more needed. There seems to exist a vulgar notion that the subject is one of pure conventionality, and cannot be brought within the limits of intelligible and consistent *rule*. And yet, if fairly looked in the face, the whole matter is so plain that its *rationale* may be read as we run. If not anticipated, I shall hereafter, make an attempt at a magazine paper on "The Philosophy of Point." In the meantime let me say a word or two of *the dash*. Every writer for the press, who has any sense of the accurate, must have been frequently mortified and vexed at the distortion of his sentences by the printer's now general substitution of a semicolon, or comma, for the dash of the MS. The total or nearly total disuse of the latter point, has been brought about by the revulsion consequent upon its excessive employment about twenty years ago. The Byronic poets were *all* dash. John Neal, in his earlier novels, exaggerated its use into the grossest abuse—although his very error arose from the philosophical and self-dependent spirit which has always distinguished

him, and which will even yet lead him, if I am not greatly mistaken in the man, to do something for the literature of the country which the country "will not willingly," and cannot possibly, "let die." Without entering now into the *why*, let me observe that the printer may always ascertain when the dash of the MS. is properly and when improperly employed, by bearing in mind that this point represents *a second thought—an emendation*. In using it just above I have exemplified its use. The words "an emendation" are, speaking with reference to grammatical construction, put in *ap*position with the words "a second thought." Having written these latter words, I reflected whether it would not be possible to render their meaning more distinct by certain other words. Now, instead of erasing the phrase "a second thought," which is of *some* use—which *partially* conveys the idea intended—which advances me *a step toward* my full purpose—I suffer it to remain, and merely put a dash between it and the phrase "an emendation." The dash gives the reader a choice between two, or among three or more expressions, one of which may be more forcible than another, but all of which help out the idea. It stands, in general, for these words—*or, to make my meaning more distinct.*" This force *it has*—and this force no other point can have; since all other points have well-understood uses quite different from this. Therefore, the dash *cannot* be dispensed with. It has its phases—its variation of the force described; but the one principle—that of second thought or emendation—will be found at the bottom of all.

VI.

Diana's Temple at Ephesus having been burnt on the night in which Alexander was born, some

person observed that "it was no wonder, since, at the period of the conflagration, she was gossiping at Pella." Cicero commends this as a witty conceit—Plutarch condemns it as useless—and this is the one point in which I agree with the biographer.

VII.

Until we analyze a religion, or a philosophy, in respect of its inducements, independently of its rationality, we shall never be in condition to estimate that religion, or that philosophy, by the mere *number* of its adherents:—unluckily,

> No Indian Prince has to his palace
> More followers than a thief to the gallows.

VIII.

"If in any point," says Lord Bacon, "I have receded from what is commonly received, it hath been for the purpose of proceeding *melius* and not *in aliud*"—but the character assumed, in general, by modern "Reform" is, simply, that of Opposition.

IX.

A strong argument for the religion of Christ is this—that offences against *Charity* are about the only ones which men on their death-beds can be made—not to understand—but to *feel*—as *crime*.

X.

The effect derivable from well-managed rhyme is very imperfectly understood. Conventionally "rhyme" implies merely close similarity of sound at

the ends of verse, and it is really curious to observe how long mankind have been content with their limitation of the idea. What, in rhyme, first and principally pleases, may be referred to the human sense or appreciation of *equality*—the common element, as might be easily shown, of all the gratification we derive from music in its most extended sense—very especially in its modifications of metre and rhythm. We see, for example, a crystal, and are immediately interested by the equality between the sides and angles of one of its faces—but, on bringing to view a second face, in all respects similar to the first, our pleasure seems to be *squared*—on bringing to view a third, it appears to be *cubed*, and so on: I have no doubt, indeed, that the delight experienced, if measurable, would be found to have exact mathematical relations, such, or nearly such, as I suggest—that is to say, as far as a certain point, beyond which there would be a decrease, in similar relations. Now here, as the ultimate result of analysis, we reach the sense of mere *equality*, or rather the human delight in this sense; and it was an instinct, rather than a clear comprehension of this delight as a principle, which, in the first instance, led the poet to attempt an increase of the effect arising from the mere similarity (that is to say equality) between two sounds—led him, I say, to attempt increasing this effect by making a secondary equalization, in placing the rhymes at equal distances—that is, at the ends of lines of equal length. In this manner, rhyme and the termination of the line grew connected in men's thoughts—grew into a conventionalism—the principle being lost sight of altogether. And it was simply because Pindaric verses had, before this epoch, existed—*i. e.*, verses of unequal length—that rhymes were subsequently found at unequal dis-

tances. It was for this reason solely, I say—for none more profound. Rhyme had come to be regarded as of right appertaining to the *end* of verse—and here we complain that the matter has finally rested. But it is clear that there was much more to be considered. So far, the sense of *equality* alone, entered the effect; or, if this equality was slightly varied, it was varied only through an accident—the accident of the existence of Pindaric metres. It will be seen that the rhymes were always *anticipated*. The eye, catching the end of a verse, whether long or short, expected, for the ear, a rhyme. The great element of unexpectedness was not dreamed of—that is to say, of novelty—of originality. "But," says Lord Bacon, (how justly!) "there is no exquisite beauty without some *strangeness* in the proportions.' Take away this element of strangeness—of unexpectedness —of novelty—of originality—call it what we will—and all that is *ethereal* in loveliness is lost at once. We lose—we miss the *unknown*—the vague—the uncomprehended, because offered before we have time to examine and comprehend. We lose, in short, all that assimilates the beauty of earth with what we dream of the beauty of Heaven. Perfection of rhyme is attainable only in the combination of the two elements, Equality and Unexpectedness. But as evil cannot exist without good, so unexpectedness must arise from expectedness. We do not contend for mere *arbitrariness* of rhyme. In the first place, we must have equi-distant or regularly recurring rhymes, to form the basis, expectedness, out of which arises the element, unexpectedness, by the introduction of rhymes, not arbitrarily, but with an eye to the greatest amount of unexpectedness. We should not introduce them, for example, at such points that the entire line is a multiple of the syl-

lables preceding the points. When, for instance, I write—

> And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain,

I produce more, to be sure, but not remarkably more than the ordinary effect of rhymes regularly recurring at the ends of lines; for the number of syllables in the whole verse is merely a multiple of the number of syllables preceding the rhyme introduced at the middle, and there is still left, therefore, a certain degree of expectedness. What there is of the element, unexpectedness, is addressed, in fact, to the eye only—for the ear divides the verse into two ordinary lines, thus:

> And the silken, sad, uncertain
> Rustling of each purple curtain.

I obtain, however, the whole effect of unexpectedness, when I write—

Thrilled me, *filled* me with fantastic terrors never felt before.

N. B. It is very commonly supposed that rhyme, as it now ordinarily exists, is of modern invention—but see the "Clouds of Aristophanes." Hebrew verse, however, did *not* include it—the terminations, of the lines, where most distinct, never showing any thing of the kind.

XI.

Paulus Jovius, living in those benighted times when diamond-pointed styluses were as yet unknown, thought proper, nevertheless, to speak of his goosequill as "*aliquando ferreus, aureus aliquando*"—intending, of course, a mere figure of speech; and

from the class of modern authors who use really nothing to write with but steel and gold, some, no doubt, will let their pens, *vice versa*, descend to posterity under the designation of "anserine"—of course, intending always a mere figure of speech.

XII.

The Carlyle-ists should adopt, as a motto, the inscription on the old bell from whose metal was cast the Great Tom, of Oxford:—"In *Thomæ* laude resono 'Bim! Bom!' sine fraude":—and "Bim! Bom," in such case, would be a marvellous "echo of sound to sense."

XIII.

An infinity of error makes its way into our Philosophy, through Man's habit of considering himself a citizen of a world solely—of an individual plane—instead of at least occasionally contemplating his position as cosmopolite proper—as a denizen of the universe.

XIV.

Talking of puns:—"Why do they not give us quail for dinner, as usual?" demanded Count Fessis, the other day, of H——, the classicist and sportsman.

"Because at this season," replied H——, who was dozing,— "*qualis sopor fessis*." (Quail is so poor, Fessis.)

XV.

The German "*Schwarmerei*"—not exactly "humbug," but "sky-rocketing"—seems to be the only term by which we can conveniently designate that

peculiar style of criticism which has lately come into fashion, through the influence of certain members of the *Fabian* family—people who live (upon beans) about Boston.

XVI.

Some Frenchman—possibly Montaigne—says: "People talk about thinking, but for my part I never think, except when I sit down to write." It is this never thinking, unless when we sit down to write, which is the cause of so much indifferent composition. But perhaps there is something more involved in the Frenchman's observation than meets the eye. It is certain that the mere act of inditing, tends, in a great degree, to the logicalization of thought. Whenever, on account of its vagueness, I am dissatisfied with a conception of the brain, I resort forthwith to the pen, for the purpose of obtaining, through its aid, the necessary form, consequence and precision.

How very commonly we hear it remarked, that such and such thoughts are beyond the compass of words! I do not believe that any thought, properly so called, is out of the reach of language. I fancy, rather, that where difficulty in expression is experienced, there is, in the intellect which experiences it, a want either of deliberateness or of method. For my own part, I have never had a thought which I could not set down in words, with even more distinctness than that with which I conceived it:—as I have before observed, the thought is logicalized by the effort at (written) expression. There is, however, a class of fancies, of exquisite delicacy, which are *not* thoughts, and to which, *as yet*, I have found it absolutely impossible to adapt language. I use the word *fancies* at random, and merely because I must

use *some* word; but the idea commonly attached to the term is not even remotely applicable to the shadows of shadows in question. They seem to me rather psychal than intellectual. They arise in the soul (alas, how rarely!) only at its epochs of most intense tranquillity—when the bodily and mental health are in perfection—and at those mere points of time where the confines of the waking world blend with those of the world of dreams. I am aware of these "fancies" only when I am upon the very brink of sleep, with the consciousness that I am so. I have satisfied myself that this condition exists but for an inappreciable *point* of time—yet it is crowded with these "shadows of shadows"; and for absolute *thought* there is demanded time's *endurance*. These "fancies" have in them a pleasurable ecstasy, as far beyond the most pleasurable of the world of wakefulness, or of dreams, as the heaven of the Northman theology is beyond its hell. I regard the visions, even as they arise, with an awe which, in some measure, moderates or tranquillizes the ecstasy—I so regard them, through a conviction (which seems a portion of the ecstasy itself) that this ecstasy in itself, is of a character supernal to the human nature—is a glimpse of the spirit's outer world; and I arrive at this conclusion—if this term is at all applicable to instantaneous intuition by a perception that the delight experienced has, as its element, but *the absoluteness of novelty*. I say the absoluteness—for in these fancies—let me now term them psychal impressions—there is really nothing even approximate in character to impressions ordinarily received. It is as if the five senses were supplanted by five myriad others alien to mortality.

Now, so entire is my faith in the *power of words*, that, at times, I have believed it impossible to em-

body even the evanescence of fancies such as I have attempted to describe. In experiments with this end in view, I have proceeded so far as, first, to control (when the bodily and mental health are good) the existence of the condition:—that is to say, I can now (unless when ill) be sure that the condition will supervene, if I so wish it, at the point of time already described:—of its supervention, until lately, I could never be certain, even under the most favorable circumstances. I mean to say, merely, that now I can be sure, when all circumstances are favorable, of the supervention of the condition, and feel even the capacity of inducing or compelling it:—the favorable circumstances, however, are not the less rare—else had I compelled, already, the heaven into the earth.

I have proceeded so far, secondly, as to prevent the lapse from *the point* of which I speak—the point of blending between wakefulness and sleep—as to prevent at will, I say, the lapse from this borderground into the dominion of sleep. Not that I can *continue* the condition—not that I can render the point more than a point—but that I can startle myself from the point into wakefulness; *and thus transfer the point itself into the realm of Memory;* convey its impressions, or more properly their recollections, to a situation where (although still for a very brief period) I can survey them with the eye of analysis. For these reasons—that is to say, because I have been enabled to accomplish thus much—I do not altogether despair of embodying in words at least enough of the fancies in question to convey, to certain classes of intellect, a shadowy conception of their character. In saying this I am not to be understood as supposing that the fancies, or psychal impressions, to which I allude, are con-

fined to my individual self—are not, in a word, common to all mankind—for on this point it is quite impossible that I should form an opinion—but nothing can be more certain than that even a partial record of the impressions would startle the universal intellect of mankind, by the *supremeness of the novelty* of the material employed, and of its consequent suggestions. In a word—should I ever write a paper on this topic, the world will be compelled to acknowledge that, at last, I have done an original thing.

XVII.

In the way of original, striking, and well-sustained metaphor, we can call to mind few finer things than this—to be found in James Puckle's "Gray Cap for a Green head": "In speaking of the dead, so fold up your discourse that their virtues may be outwardly shown, while their vices are wrapped up in silence."

XVIII.

Talking of inscriptions—how admirable was the one circulated at Paris, for the equestrian statue of Louis XV., done by Pigal and Bouchardon—"*Statua Statuæ*"

XIX.

"This is right," says Epicurus, "precisely because the people are displeased with it."

"*Il y a á parier*," says Chamfort—one of the *Kamkars* of Mirabeau—"*que toute idée publique—toute convention recue—est une sottise car elle a convenue au plus grand nombre.*"

"*Si proficere cupis*," says the great African bishop,

"*primo id verum puta quod sana mens omnium hominum attestatur.*"

Now,

Who shall decide where Doctors disagree?

To me it appears that, in all ages, the *most* preposterous falsities have been received as truths by at least the *mens* omnium hominum. As for the *sana* mens—how are we ever to determine what that is?

XX.

This book* could never have been popular out of Germany. It is too simple—too direct—too obvious—too *bold*—not sufficiently complex—to be relished by any people who have *thoroughly* passed the first (or impulsive) epoch of literary civilization. The Germans have not yet passed this first epoch. It must be remembered that *during the whole of the middle ages they lived in utter ignorance of the art of writing.* From so total a darkness, of so late a date, they could not, *as a nation*, have as yet fully emerged into the second or critical epoch. Individual Germans have been critical in the best sense—but the masses are unleavened. Literary Germany thus presents the singular spectacle of the impulsive spirit surrounded by the critical, and, of course, in some measure influenced thereby. England, for example, has advanced far, and France much farther, into the critical epoch; and their effect on the German mind is seen in the widely anomalous condition of the German literature at large. That this latter will be improved by age, however, should never be maintained. As the impulsive spirit subsides, and the

* "Thiodolf, the Icelander and Aslauga's Knight." No. 60 of Wiley & Putnam's Foreign Series of "The Library of Choice Reading."

critical uprises, there will appear the polished insipidity of the later England, or that ultimate *throe* of taste which has found its best exemplification in Sue. At present the German literature resembles no other on the face of the earth—for it is the result of certain conditions which, before this individual instance of their fulfilment, have never been fulfilled. And this anomalous state to which I refer is the source of our anomalous criticism upon what that state produces—is the source of the grossly conflicting opinions about German letters. For my own part, I admit the German vigor, the German directness, boldness, imagination, and some other qualities of impulse, just as I am willing to admit and admire these qualities in the first (or impulsive) epochs of British and French letters. At the German criticism, however, I cannot refrain from laughing all the more heartily, all the more seriously I hear it praised. Not that, in detail, it affects me as an absurdity—but in the adaptation of its details. It abounds in brilliant bubbles of *suggestion*, but these rise and sink and jostle each other, until the whole vortex of thought in which they originate is one indistinguishable chaos of froth. The German criticism is *unsettled*, and can only be settled by time. At present it suggests without demonstrating, or convincing, or effecting any definite purpose under the sun. We read it, rub our foreheads, and ask "What then?" I am not ashamed to say that I prefer even Voltaire to Goethe, and hold Macaulay to possess more of the true critical spirit than Augustus William and Frederick Schlegel combined. "Thiodolf" is called by Foqué his "most *successful* work." He would not have spoken thus had he considered it his *best*. It is admirable of its kind—but its kind can *never* be appreciated by Americans.

It will affect them much as would a grasp of the hand from a man of ice. Even the exquisite "Undine" is too chilly for our people, and, generally, for our epoch. We have less imagination and warmer sympathies than the age which preceded us. It would have done Foqué more ready and fuller justice than ours. Has any one remarked the striking similarity in tone between "Undine" and the "Libussa" of Musœus?

XXI.

What can be more soothing, at once to a man's Pride and to his Conscience, than the conviction that, in taking vengeance on his enemies for *in*justice done him, he has simply to do them *justice* in return?

XXII.

Bielfeld, the author of "*Les Premiers Traits de L'Erudition Universelle*," defines poetry as "*l'art d'exprimer les pensées par la fiction.*" The Germans have two works in full accordance with this definition absurd as it is—the terms *Dichtkunst*, the art of fiction, and Dichten, to feign—which are generally used for poetry and to make verses.

XXIII.

Brown, in his "Amusements," speaks of having transfused the blood of an ass into the veins of an astrological quack—and there can be no doubt that one of Hague's progenitors was the man.

XXIV.

The chief portion of Professor Espy's theory has been anticipated by Roger Bacon.

XXV.

Whatever may be the merits or demerits, generally, of the Magazine Literature of America, there can be no question as to its extent or influence. The Topic—Magazine Literature—is therefore an important one. In a few years its importance will be found to have increased in geometrical ratio. The whole tendency of the age is Magazine-ward. The Quarterly Reviews have *never* been popular. Not only are they too stilted, (by way of keeping up a due dignity,) but they make a point, with the same end in view, of discussing only topics which are *caviare* to the many, and which, for the most part, have only a conventional interest even with the few. Their issues, also, are at too long intervals, their subjects get cold before being served up. In a word, their ponderosity is quite out of keeping with the *rush* of the age. We now demand the light artillery of the intellect: we need the curt, the condensed, the pointed, the readily diffused—in place of the verbose, the detailed, the voluminous, the inaccessible. On the other hand, the lightness of the artillery should not degenerate into popgunnery—by which term we may designate the character of the greater portion of the newspaper press—their sole legitimate object being the discussion of ephemeral matters in an ephemeral manner. Whatever talent may be brought to bear upon our daily journals, and in many cases this talent is very great, still the imperative necessity of catching, *currente calamo*, each topic as it flits before the eye of the public, must of course materially narrow the limits of their power. The bulk and the period of issue of the monthly magazines, seem to be precisely adapted, if not to all the literary wants of the day, at least to the largest and

most imperative, as well as the most consequential portion of them.

XXVI.

My friend ——, can never commence what he fancies a poem (he *is* a fanciful man, after all) without first elaborately "invoking the Muses." Like so many she-dogs of John of Nivelles, however, the more he invokes them, the more they decline obeying the invocation.

XXVII.

The nose of a mob is its imagination. By this, at any time, it can be quietly led.

XXVIII.

There lies a deep and sealed well
Within yon leafy forest hid,
Whose pent and lonely waters swell
Its confines chill and drear amid.

This putting the adjective after the noun is, merely, an inexcusable Gallicism; but the putting the preposition after the noun is alien to all language, and in opposition to all its principles. Such things, in general, serve only to betray the versifier's poverty of resource; and, when an inversion of this kind occurs, we say to ourselves, "Here the poet lacked the skill to make out his line without distorting the natural or colloquial order of the words." Now and then, however, we must refer the error not to deficiency of skill, but to something far less defensible—to an idea that such things belong to the essence of poetry —that it needs them to distinguish it from prose—that we are poetical, in a word, very much in the ratio of our unprosaicalness at these points. Even

while employing the phrase "poetic license,"—a phrase which has to answer for an infinity of sins—people who think in this way seem to have an indistinct conviction that the license in question *involves a necessity of being adopted.* The true artist will avail himself of no "license" whatever. The very word will disgust him; for it says—"Since you seem unable to manage without these peccadillo advantages, you must have them, I suppose; and the world, half-shutting its eyes, will do its best not to see the awkwardness which they stamp upon your poem."

Few things have greater tendency than inversion, to render verse feeble and ineffective. In most cases where a line is spoken of as "forcible," the force may be referred to directness of expression. A vast majority of the passages which have become household through frequent quotation, owe their popularity either to this directness, or, in general, to the scorn of "poetic license." In short, as regards verbal construction, *the more prosaic* a poetical style is, the better. Through this species of prosaicism, Cowper, with scarcely one of the higher poetical elements, came very near making his age fancy him the equal of Pope; and to the same cause are attributable three-fourths of that unusual point and force for which Moore is distinguished. It is the *prosaicism* of these two writers to which is owing their especial *quotability.*

XXIX.

The Reverend Arthur Coxe's "Saul, a Mystery," having been condemned in no measured terms by Poe, of "The Broadway Journal," and Green of "The Emporium," a writer in the "Hartford Columbian" retorts as follows:

An entertaining history,
Entitled "Saul, a Mystery,"
Has recently been published by the Rev. Arthur Coxe
The poem is dramatic,
And the wit of it is attic,
And its teachings are emphatic of the doctrines orthodox.

But Mr. Poe, the poet,
Declares he cannot go it—
That the book is very stupid, or something of that sort.
And Green, of the Empori-
Um, tells a kindred story,
And swears like any tory that it isn't worth a groat.

But maugre all the croaking
[illegible] the Raven and the joking
Of the verdant [illegible] fellow of the used to be review,
[illegible]ue People, in derision
Of their impudent decision,
Have declared, without division, that the Mystery will do.

The *truth*, of course, rather injures an epigram than otherwise; and nobody will think the worse of the one above, when I say that, at the date of its first appearance, I had expressed *no opinion whatever* of the poem to which it refers. "Give a dog a bad name," &c. Whenever a book is abused, people take it for granted that is it *I* who have been abusing it.

Latterly I *have* read "Saul," and agree with the epigrammatist, that it "will do"—whoever attempts to wade through it. It will do, also, for trunk-paper. The author is right in calling it "A Mystery"—for a most unfathomable mystery it is. When I got to the end of it, I found it more mysterious than ever—and it was really a mystery how I ever did get to the end—which I half fancied that somebody had cut off, in a fit of ill-will to the critics. I have heard not a syllable about the "Mystery," of late days.

"The People" seem to have forgotten it; and Mr. Coxe's friends should advertise it under the head of "Mysterious Disappearance"—that is to say, the disappearance of a Mystery.

XXX.

The *vox populi*, so much talked about to so little purpose, is, possibly, that very *vox et preterea nihil* which the countrymen, in Catullus, mistook for a nightingale.

XXXI.

The *pure Imagination* chooses, from *either Beauty or Deformity*, only the most combinable things hitherto uncombined; the compound, as a general rule, partaking, in character, of beauty, or sublimity, in the ratio of the respective beauty or sublimity of the things combined—which are themselves still to be considered as atomic—that is to say, as previous combinations. But, as often analogously happens in physical chemistry, so not unfrequently does it occur in this chemistry of the intellect, that the admixture of two elements results in a something that has nothing of the qualities of one of them, or even nothing of the qualities of either. . . . Thus, the range of Imagination is unlimited. Its materials extend throughout the universe. Even out of deformities it fabricates that *Beauty* which is at once its sole object and its inevitable test. But, in general, the richness or force of the matters combined; the facility of discovering combinable novelties worth combining; and, especially, the absolute "chemical combination" of the completed mass—are the particulars to be regarded in our estimate

of Imagination. It is this thorough harmony of an imaginative work which so often causes it to be undervalued by the thoughtless, through the character of *obviousness* which is superinduced. We are apt to find ourselves asking *why* it is that these combinations have never been imagined before.

XXXII.

In examining trivial details, we are apt to overlook essential generalities. Thus M——, in making a to-do about the "typographical mistakes" in his book, has permitted the printer to escape a scolding which he *did* richly deserve—a scolding for a "typographical mistake" of really vital importance—the mistake of having printed the book at all.

XXXIII.

It has been well said of the French orator, Dupin, that "he spoke, as nobody else, the language of everybody"; and thus his manner seems to be exactly conversed in that of the Frogpondian Euphuists, who, on account of the familiar tone in which they lisp their *outré* phrases, may be said to speak, as everybody, the language of nobody—that is to say, a language emphatically their own.

XXXIV.

He (Bulwer) is the most accomplished writer of the most accomplished era of English Letters; practising all styles and classes of composition, and eminent in all—novelist, dramatist, poet, historian, moral philosopher, essayist, critic, political pamphleteer;—in each superior to all others, and only rivalled in each by himself.—*Ward—author of "Tremaine."*

The "only rivalled in each by himself," here, puts me in mind of

None but himself can be his parallel.

But surely Mr. Ward (who, although he did write "De Vere," is by no means a fool) could never have put to paper, in his sober senses, anything so absurd as the paragraph quoted above, without stopping at every third word to hold his sides, or thrust his pocket-handkerchief into his mouth. If the serious intention be insisted upon, however, I have to remark that the opinion is the *mere* opinion of a writer remarkable for no other good trait than his facility at putting his readers to sleep according to rules Addisonian, and with the least possible loss of labor and time. But as the *mere* opinion of even a Jeffrey or a Macaulay, I have an inalienable right to meet it with another.

As a novelist, then, Bulwer is far more than respectable; although *generally* inferior to Scott, Godwin, D'Israeli, Miss Burney, Sue, Dumas, Dickens, the author of "Ellen Wareham," and the author of "Jane Eyre," and several others. From the list of foreign novels I could select a hundred which he could neither have written nor conceived. As a dramatist, he deserves more credit, although he receives less. His "Richelieu," "Money," and "Lady of Lyons," have done much in the way of opening the public eyes to the true value of what is superciliously termed "stage effect" in the hands of one able to manage it. But if commendable at this point, his dramas fail egregiously in points more important; so that, upon the whole, he can be said to have written a good play, only when we think of him in connexion with the still more contemptible "old-dramatist" imitators who are his

contemporaries and friends. As historian, he is sufficiently dignified, sufficiently ornate, and more than sufficiently self-sufficient. His "Athens" would have received an Etonian prize, and has all the happy air of an Etonian prize-essay re-vamped. His political pamphlets are very good as political pamphlets and very disreputable as anything else. His essays leave no doubt upon any body's mind that, with the writer, they have been essays indeed. His criticism is really beneath contempt. His moral philosophy is the most ridiculous of all the moral philosophies that ever have been imagined upon earth.

"The men of sense," says Helvetius, "those idols of the unthinking, are very far inferior to the men of passions. It is the strong passions which, rescuing us from sloth, can alone impart to us that continuous and earnest attention necessary to great intellectual efforts."

When the Swiss philosopher here speaks of "inferiority," he refers to inferiority in worldly success:—by "men of sense" he intends indolent men of genius. And Bulwer is, emphatically, one of the "men of passions" contemplated in the apothegm. His passions, with opportunities, have made him what he is. Urged by a rabid ambition to do much, in doing nothing he would merely have proved himself an idiot. Something he has done. In aiming at Crichton, he has hit the target an inch or two above Harrison Ainsworth. Not to such intellects belong the honors of universality. His works bear about them the unmistakable indications of mere talent—talent, I grant, of an unusual order, and nurtured to its extreme of development with a very tender and elaborate care. Nevertheless, it is talent still. Genius it is not.

And the proof is, that while we often fancy ourselves about to be enkindled beneath its influence, fairly enkindled we never are. That Bulwer is no *poet*, follows as a corollary from what has been already said:—for to speak of a poet without genius, is merely to put forth a flat contradiction in terms.

XXXV.

In the tale proper—where there is no space for development of character or for great profusion and variety of incident—mere *construction* is, of course, far more imperatively demanded than in the novel. Defective plot, in this latter, may escape observation, but in the tale, never. Most of our tale-writers, however, neglect the distinction. They seem to begin their stories without knowing how they are to end; and their ends, generally,—like so many governments of Trinculo—appear to have forgotten their beginnings.

XXXVI.

Quaintness, within reasonable limits, is not only *not* to be regarded as affectation, but has its proper uses, in aiding a fantastic effect. Miss Barrett will afford me two examples. In some lines to a Dog, she says:

> Leap! thy broad tail waves a light.
> Leap, thy slender feet are bright,
> Canopied in fringes.
> Leap! those tasselled ears of thine
> Flicker strangely fair and fine
> *Down their golden inches.*

And again—in the "Song of a Tree-Spirit."

> The Divine impulsion cleaves
> In dim movements to the leaves
> *Dropt and lifted—dropt and lifted—*
> In the sun-light greenly sifted—
> *In the sun-light and the moon-light*
> *Greenly sifted through the trees.*
> *Ever wave the Eden trees*
> *In the night-light and the moon-light,*
> With a ruffling of green branches
> *Shaded off to resonances*
> Never stirred by rain or breeze.

The thoughts here belong to a high order of poetry, but could not have been wrought into effective expression, without the aid of those repetitions—those unusual phrases—those *quaintnesses*, in a word, which it has been too long the fashion to censure, indiscriminately, under the one general head of "affectation." No poet will fail to be pleased with the two extracts I have here given; but no doubt there are some who will find it hard to reconcile the psychal impossibility of refraining from admiration, with the too-hastily attained mental conviction that, critically, there is nothing to admire.

XXXVII.

Mozart declared, on his death-bed, that he "began to see what *may* be done in music"; and it is to be hoped that De Meyer and the rest of the spasmodists will, eventually, begin to understand what may *not* be done in this particular branch of the Fine Arts.

XXXVIII.

For my part I agree with Joshua Barnes: nobody but Solomon could have written the Iliad. The catalogue of ships was the work of Robins.

XXXIX.

In Colton's "American Review" for October, 1845, a gentleman, well known for his scholarship, has a forcible paper on "The Scotch School of Philosophy and Criticism." But although the paper is "forcible," it presents the most singular admixture of error and truth—the one dovetailed into the other, after a fashion which is novel to say the least of it. Were I to designate in a few words what the whole article demonstrated, I should say "the folly of not beginning at the beginning—of neglecting the giant Moulineau's advice to his friend Ram." Here is a passage from the essay in question:

> The Doctors [Campbell and Johnson] both charge Pope with error and inconsistency:—error in supposing that *in English*, of metrical lines unequal in the number of syllables and pronounced in equal times, the longer suggests celerity (this being the principle of the Alexandrine:)—inconsistency, in that Pope himself uses the same contrivance to convey the contrary idea of slowness. But why in English? It is not and cannot be disputed that, in the hexameter verse of the Greeks and Latins—which is the model in this matter—what is distinguished as the "dactylic line" was uniformly applied to express velocity. How was it to do so? Simply from the fact of being pronounced in an equal time with, while containing a greater number of syllables or "bars" than the ordinary or average measure; as, on the other hand, the spondaic line, composed of the minimum number, was, upon the same principle, used to indicate slowness. So, too, of the Alexandrine in English versification. No, says Campbell, there is a difference: the Alexandrine is not in fact, like the dactylic line, pronounced in the common time. But does this alter the principle? What is the rationale of Metre, whether the classical hexameter or the English heroic?'"

I have written an essay on the "Rationale of Verse," in which the whole topic is surveyed *abinitio*,

and with reference to general and immutable principles. To this essay I refer Mr. Bristed. In the meantime, without troubling myself to ascertain whether Doctors Johnson and Campbell are wrong, or whether Pope is wrong, or whether the reviewer is right or *wrong*, at this point or at that, let me succinctly state what is *the truth* on the topics at issue. And *first;* the same principles, in *all* cases, govern *all* verse. What is true in English is true in Greek. *Secondly;* in a series of lines, if one line contains more syllables than the law of the verse demands, and if, nevertheless, this line is pronounced in the same time, upon the whole, as the rest of the lines, then this line suggests celerity—on account of the increased rapidity of enunciation required. Thus in the Greek hexameter the dactylic lines—those most abounding in dactyls—serve best to convey the idea of rapid motion. The spondaic lines convey that of slowness. *Thirdly;* it is a gross mistake to suppose that the Greek dactylic line is "the model in this matter"—the matter of the English Alexandrine. The Greek dactylic line is of the same number of feet—bars—beats—pulsations—as the ordinary dactylic-spondaic lines among which it occurs. But the Alexandrine is longer by one foot—by one pulsation—than the pentameters among which it arises. For its pronunciation it demands *more time*, and therefore, *ceteris paribus*, it would well serve to convey the impression of length, or duration, and thus, indirectly, of slowness. I say *ceteris paribus*. But, by varying conditions, we can effect a total change in the impression conveyed. When the idea of slowness is conveyed by the Alexandrine, it is not conveyed by any slower enunciation of syllables—that is to say, it is not *directly* conveyed—but indirectly, through the idea

of *length* in the whole line. Now, if we wish to convey, by means of an Alexandrine, the impression of velocity, we readily do so by giving rapidity to our enunciation of the syllables composing the several feet. To effect this, however, we must have *more* syllables, or we shall get through the whole line too quickly for the intended time. To get more syllables, all we have to do, is to use, in place of iambuses, what our prosodies call anapæsts.* Thus in the line,

Flies o'er the unbending corn and skims along the main,

the syllables "*the unbend*" form an anapæst and, demanding unusual rapidity of enunciation, in order that we may get them in the ordinary time of an iambus, serve to suggest celerity. By the elision of *e* in *the*, as is customary, the whole of the intended effect is lost; for *th'unbend* is nothing more than the usual iambus. In a word, whenever an Alexandrine expresses celerity, we shall find it to contain one or more anapæsts—the more anapæsts, the more decided the impression. But the tendency of the Alexandrine consisting merely of the usual iambuses, is to convey slowness—although it conveys this idea feebly, on account of conveying it indirectly. It follows, from what I have said, that the common pentameter, interspersed with anapæsts, would better convey celerity than the Alexandrine interspersed with them in a similar degree;—and it unquestionably does.

* I use the prosodial word "anapæst," merely because here I have no space to show what the reviewer will admit I have distinctly shown in the essay referred to—viz.: that the additional syllable introduced, does *not* make the foot an anapæst, or the equivalent of an anapæst, and that, if it did, it would spoil the line. On this topic, and on all topics connected with verse, there is not a prosody in existence which is not a mere jumble of the grossest error.

XL.

This "species of nothingness" is quite as reasonable, at all events, as any "kind of somethingness." See Cowley's "Creation," where,

An unshaped kind of something first appeared.

XLI.

If any ambitious man have a fancy to revolutionize, at one effort, the universal world of human thought, human opinion, and human sentiment, the opportunity is his own—the road to immortal renown lies straight, open, and unencumbered before him. All that he has to do is to write and publish a very little book. Its title should be simple—a few plain words—"My Heart Laid Bare." But—this little book must be *true to its title.*

Now, is it not very singular that, with the rabid thirst for notoriety which distinguishes so many of mankind—so many, too, who care not a fig what is thought of them after death, there should not be found one man having sufficient hardihood to write this little book? To *write*, I say. There are ten thousand men who, if the book were once written, would laugh at the notion of being disturbed by its publication during their life, and who could not even conceive *why* they should object to its being published after their death. But to write it—*there* is the rub. No man dare write it. No man ever will dare write it. No man *could* write it, even if he dared. The paper would shrivel and blaze at every touch of the fiery pen.

XLII.

All that the man of genius demands for his exaltation is moral matter in motion. It makes no dif-

ference *whither* tends the motion—whether for him or against him—and it is absolutely of *no* consequence "*what* is the matter."

XLIII.

To converse well, we need the cool tact of talent—to talk well, the glowing *abandon* of genius. Men of *very* high genius, however, talk at one time *very* well, at another *very* ill:—well, when they have full time, full scope, and a sympathetic listener:—ill, when they fear interruption and are annoyed by the impossibility of exhausting the topic during that particular talk. The partial genius is flashy—scrappy. The true genius shudders at incompleteness—imperfection—and usually prefers silence to saying the something which is not everything that should be said. He is so filled with his theme that he is dumb, first from not knowing how to begin, where there seems eternally beginning behind beginning, and secondly from preceiving his true end at so infinite a distance. Sometimes, dashing into a subject, he blunders, hesitates, stops short, sticks fast, and because he has been overwhelmed by the rush and multiplicity of his thoughts, his hearers sneer at his inability to think. Such a man finds his proper element in those "great occasions" which confound and prostrate the general intellect.

Nevertheless, by his conversation, the influence of the conversationist upon mankind in general, is more decided than that of the talker by his talk:—the latter invariably talks to best purpose with his pen. And good conversationists are more rare than respectable talkers. I know many of the latter; and of the former only five or six:—among whom I can call to mind, just now, Mr. Willis, Mr.

J. T. S. Sullivan, of Philadelphia, Mr. W. M. R., of Petersburg, Va., and Mrs. S——d, formerly of New York. Most people, in conversing, force us to curse our stars that our lot was not cast among the African nation mentioned by Eudoxus—the savages who having no mouths, never opened them, as a matter of course. And yet, if denied mouth, some persons whom I have in my eye would contrive to chatter on still—as they do now—through the nose.

XLIV.

I cannot tell how it happens, but, unless, now and then, in a case of portrait-painting, very few of our artists can justly be held guilty of the crime imputed by Apelles to Portogenes—that of "being too natural."

XLV.

It was a pile of the oyster, which yielded the precious pearls of the South, and the artist had judiciously painted some with their lips parted, and showing within the large precious fruit in the attainment of which Spanish cupidity had already proved itself capable of every peril, as well as every crime. At once true and poetical, no comment could have been more severe, &c.—Mr. Simms' *Damsel of Darien.*

Body of Bacchus!—only think of poetical beauty in the countenance of a gaping oyster!

And how natural, in an age so fanciful, to believe that the stars and starry groups beheld in the new world for the first time by the native of the old were especially assigned for its government and protection.

Now, if by the old world be meant the east, and by the new world the west, I am at a loss to know what *are* the stars seen in the one which cannot be equally seen in the other. Mr. Simms has abundant

faults—or had;—among which inaccurate English, a proneness to revolting images, and pet phrases, are the most noticeable. Nevertheless, leaving out of the question Brockden, Brown, and Hawthorne, (who are each a *genius*,) he is immeasurably the best writer of fiction in America. He has more vigor, more imagination, more movement, and more general capacity than all our novelists (save Cooper) combined.

XLVI.

All in a hot and copper sky
The bloody sun at noon
Just up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.—COLERIDGE.

Is it possible that the poet did not know the apparent diameter of the moon to be greater than that of the sun?

XLVII.

Here is an edition,* which, so far as microscopical excellence and absolute accuracy of typography are concerned, might well be prefaced with the phrase of the Koran—"There is *no* error in this book." We cannot call a single inverted *o* an error—*can* we? But I am really as glad of having found that inverted *o*, as ever was a Columbus or an Archimedes. What, after all, are continents discovered, or silversmiths exposed? Give us a good *o* turned upside-down, and a whole herd of bibliomanic Arguses overlooking it for years.

XLVIII.

That sweet smile and serene—that smile never seen but upon the face of the dying and the dead.—*Earnest Maltravers.*

* Camöens—Genoa—1798.

Bulwer is not the man to look a stern fact in the face. He would rather sentimentalize upon a vulgar although picturesque error. Who ever *really* saw anything but horror in the smile of the dead? We so earnestly *desire* to fancy it "sweet"—that is the source of the mistake; if, indeed, there ever was a mistake in the question.

XLIX.

The misapplication of quotations is clever, and has a capital effect, when well done; but Lord Brougham has not exactly that kind of capacity which the thing requires. One of the best hits in this way is made by Tieck, and I have lately seen it appropriated, with interesting complacency, in an English magazine. The author of the "Journey into the Blue Distance," is giving an account of some young ladies, not very beautiful, whom he caught *in mediis rebus*, at their toilet. "They were curling their monstrous heads," says he, "*as Shakspeare says of the waves in a storm.*"

L.

Here are both Dickens and Bulwer perpetually using the adverb "directly" in the sense of "as soon as." "Directly he came I did so and so."—"Directly I knew it I said this and that." But observe!—"Grammar is hardly taught," [in the United States,] "being thought an unnecessary basis for other learning." I quote "*America and her Resources*," by the British Counsellor at Law, John Bristed.

LI.

At Ermenonville, too, there is a striking instance of the Gallic rhythm with which a Frenchman

regards the English verse. There Gerardin has the following inscription to the memory of Shenstone:

> This plain stone
> To William Shenstone.
> In his writings he displayed
> A mind natural;
> At Leasowes he laid
> Arcadian greens rural.

There are few Parisians, speaking English, who would find anything *particularly* the matter with this epitaph.

LII.

Upon her was lavished the enthusiastic applause of the most correct taste, and of the deepest sensibility. Human triumph, in all that is most exciting and delicious, never went beyond that which she experienced—or never but in the case of Taglioni. For what are the extorted adulations that fall to the lot of the conqueror?—what even are the extensive honors of the popular author—his far-reaching fame—his high influence—or the most devout public appreciation of his works—to that rapturous approbation of the personal woman—that spontaneous, instant, present, and palpable applause—those irrepressible acclamations—those eloquent sighs and tears which the idolized Malibran at once heard, and saw, and deeply felt that she deserved? Her brief career was one gorgeous dream—for even the many sad intervals of her grief were but dust in the balance of her glory. In this book* I read much about the causes which curtailed her existence; and there seems to hang

* "Memoirs and Letters of Madame Malibran," by the Countess of Merlin.

around them, as here given, an indistinctness which the fair memorialist tries in vain to illumine. She seems never to approach the full truth. She seems never to reflect that the speedy decease was but a condition of the rapturous life. No thinking person, hearing Malibran sing, could have doubted that she would die in the spring of her days. She crowded ages into hours. She left the world at twenty-five, having existed her thousands of years.

LIII.

"Accursed be the heart that does not wildly throb, and palsied be the eye that will not weep over the woes of the wanderer of Switzerland."—*Monthly Register*, 1807.

This is "dealing damnation round the land" to some purpose;—upon the reader, and not upon the author, as usual. For my part I shall be one of the damned; for I have in vain endeavored to see even a shadow of merit in anything ever written by either of the Montgomeries.

LIV.

Strange—that I should here* find the only non-execrable *barbarian* attempts at imitation of the Greek and Roman measures!

LV.

In my reply to the letter signed "Outis," and defending Mr. Longfellow from certain charges supposed to have been made against him by myself, I took occasion to assert that "of the class of wilful

* Forelaesninger over det Danske Sprog, eller resonneret Dansk Grammatik, ved Jacob Buden.

plagiarists nine out of ten are anthors of established reputation who plunder recondite, neglected, or forgotten books." I came to this conclusion *à priori;* but experience has confirmed me in it. Here is a plagiarism from Channing; and as it is perpetrated by an anonymous writer in a monthly magazine, the theft seems at war with my assertion —until it is seen that the magazine in question is Campbell's "New Monthly" for *August*, 1828. Channing, at that time, was comparatively unknown; and, besides, the plagiarism appeared in a foreign country, where there was little probability of detection. Channing, in his essay on Buonaparte, says:

We would observe that military talent, even of the highest order, is far from holding the first place among intellectual endowments. It is one of the lower forms of genius, for it is not conversant with the highest and richest objects of thought. . . . .Still the chief work of a general is to apply physical force—to remove physical obstructions—to avail himself of physical aids and advantages—to act on matter—to overcome rivers, ramparts, mountains, and human muscles; and these are not the highest objects of mind, nor do they demand intelligence of the highest order: —and accordingly nothing is more common than to find men, eminent in this department, who are almost wholly wanting in the noblest energies of the soul—in imagination and taste—in the capacity of enjoying works of genius—in large views of human nature—in the moral sciences—in the application of analysis and generalization to the human mind and to society, and in original conceptions on the great subjects which have absorbed the most glorious understandings.

The thief in "The New Monthly," says:

Military talent, even of the highest *grade*, is *very* far from holding the first place among intellectual endowments. It is one of the lower forms of genius, for it is *never made* conversant with the *more delicate and abstruse of mental*

operations. It is used to apply physical force; to remove physical force; to remove physical obstructions; to avail itself of physical aids and advantages; and all these are not the highest objects of mind, nor do they demand intelligence of the highest *and rarest* order. Nothing is more common than to find men eminent in the science and practice of war, *wholly* wanting in the nobler energies of the soul; in imagination, in taste, in *enlarged* views of human nature, in the moral sciences, in the application of analysis and generalization to the human mind and to society; or in original conceptions on the great subjects which have *occupied and* absorbed the most glorious *of human* understandings.

The article in "The New Monthly" is on "The State of Parties." The italics are mine.

Apparent plagiarisms frequently arise from an author's self-repetition. He finds that something he has already published has fallen dead—been overlooked—or that it is peculiarly *àpropos* to another subject now under discussion. He therefore introduces the passage; often without allusion to his having printed it before; and sometimes he introduces it into an anonymous article. An anonymous writer is thus, now and then, unjustly accused of plagiarism—when the sin is merely that of self-repetition. In the present case, however, there has been a deliberate plagiarism of the silliest as well as meanest species. Trusting to the obscurity of his original, the plagiarist has fallen upon the idea of killing two birds with one stone—of dispensing with all disguise but that of *decoration*. Channing says "order"—the writer in the New Monthly says "grade." The former says that this order is "far from holding," etc.—the latter says it is "*very* far from holding." The one says that military talent is "*not* conversant," and so on—the other says "it is *never made* conversant." The one speaks of "the highest and richest objects"—

the other of "the more delicate and abstruse." Channing speaks of "thought"—the thief of "mental operations." Channing mentions "intelligence of the *highest* order"—the thief will have it of "the highest *and rarest*." Channing observes that military talent is often "*almost* wholly wanting," etc.—the thief maintains it to be "*wholly* wanting." Channing alludes to "*large* views of human nature"—the thief can be content with nothing less than "enlarged" ones. Finally, the American having been satisfied with a reference to "subjects which have absorbed the most glorious understandings," the Cockney puts him to shame at once by discoursing about "subjects which have *occupied and* absorbed the most glorious *of human* understandings"—as if one could be absorbed, without being occupied, by a subject—as if "*of*" were here any thing more than two superfluous letters—and as if there were any chance of the reader's supposing that the understandings in question were the understandings of frogs, or jackasses, or Johnny Bulls.

By the way, in a case of this kind, whenever there is a question as to who is the original and who the plagiarist, the point may be determined, almost invariably, by observing which passage is amplified, or exaggerated, in tone. To disguise his stolen horse, the uneducated thief cuts off the tail; but the educated thief prefers tying on a new tail at the end of the old one, and painting them both sky blue.

LVI.

When I consider the true talent—the real force of Mr. Emerson, I am lost in amazement at finding in him little more than a respectful imitation of Carlyle. Is it possible that Mr. E. has ever seen a copy of Seneca?

Scarcely—or he would long ago have abandoned his model in utter confusion at the parallel between his own worship of the author of "Sartor Resartus" and the aping of Sallust by Aruntius, as described in the 114th Epistle. In the writer of the "History of the Punic Wars" Emerson is portrayed to the life. The parallel is close; for not only is the imitation of the same character, but the things imitated are identical. Undoubtedly it is to be said of Sallust, far more plausibly than of Carlyle, that his obscurity, his unusuality of expression, and his Laconism (which had the effect of diffuseness, since the time gained in the mere perusal of his pithinesses is trebly lost in the necessity of cogitating them out)—it may be said of Sallust, more truly than of Carlyle, that these qualities bore the impress of his genius, and were but a portion of his unaffected thought. If there is any difference between Aruntius and Emerson, this difference is clearly in favor of the former, who was in some measure excusable, on the ground that he was as great a fool as the latter *is not*.

LVII.

I believe that odors have an altogether peculiar force, in affecting us through association; a force differing *essentially* from that of objects addressing the touch, the taste, the sight, or the hearing.

LVIII.

It would have been becoming, I think, in Bulwer, to have made at least a running acknowledgment of that extensive indebtedness to Arnay's "Private Life of the Romans,"* which he had so little scruple

* 1764.

about incurring, during the composition of "The Last days of Pompeii." He acknowledges, I believe, what he owes to Sir William Gell's "Pompeiana." Why this?—why not that?

LIX.

One of our truest poets is Thomas Buchanan Read. His most distinctive features are, first, "tenderness," or subdued passion, and secondly, fancy. His sin is imitativeness. *At present*, although evincing high capacity, he is but a copyist of Longfellow—that is to say, but the echo of an echo. Here is a beautiful thought which is *not* the property of Mr. Read:

> And, where the spring-time sun had longer shone,
> *A violet looked up and found itself alone.*

Here again: a spirit

> Slowly through the lake descended,
> Till from her hidden form below
> The waters took a golden glow,
> *As if the star which made her forehead bright*
> *Had burst and filled the lake with light.*

Lowell has some lines very similar, ending with

> As if a star had burst within his brain.

LX.

I cannot say that I ever fairly comprehended the force of the term "*insult*," until I was given to understand, one day, by a member of the "*North American Review*" clique, that this journal was "not only willing but anxious to render me that justice which had been already rendered me by the

'*Revue Francaise*' and the '*Revue des Deux Mondes*'" —but was "restrained from so doing" by my "invincible spirit of antagonism." I wish the "North American Review" to express *no* opinion of me whatever—for I have none of it. In the meantime, as I see no motto on its title-page, let me recommend it one from Sterne's "Letter from France." Here it is:—"As we rode along the valley we saw a herd of asses on the top of one of the mountains—how they viewed and *reviewed* us!"

LXI.

Von Raumer says that Enslen, a German optician, conceived the idea of throwing a shadowy figure, by optical means, into the chair of Banquo; and that the thing was readily done. Intense effect was produced; and I do not doubt that an American audience might be electrified by the feat. But our managers not only have no invention of their own, but no energy to avail themselves of that of others.

LXII.

A capital book, generally speaking;* but Mr. Grattan has a bad habit—that of loitering in the road—of dallying and toying with his subjects, as a kitten with a mouse—instead of grasping it firmly at once and eating it up without more ado. He takes up too much time in the ante-room. He has never done with his introductions. Occasionally, one introduction is but the vestibule to another; so that by the time he arrives at his main incidents, there is nothing more to tell. He seems afflicted with that curious yet common perversity observed

* "High-ways and By-ways."

in garrulous old women—the desire of tantalizing by circumlocution. Mr. G.'s circumlocution, however, is by no means like that which Albany Fonblanque describes as "a style of about and about and all the way round to nothing and nonsense." . . . If the greasy-looking lithograph here given as a frontispiece, be meant for Mr. Grattan, then is Mr. Grattan like nobody else:—for the fact is, I never yet knew an individual with a wire wig, or the countenance of an under-done apple dumpling. . . . As a general rule, no man should put his own face in his own book. In looking at the author's countenance the reader is seldom in condition to keep his own.

LXIII.

Here is a good idea for a Magazine paper:—let somebody "work it up":—A flippant pretender to universal acquirement—a would-be Crichton—engrosses, for an hour or two, perhaps, the attention of a large company—most of whom are profoundly impressed by his knowledge. He is very witty, in especial, at the expense of a modest young gentleman, who ventures to make no reply, and who, finally, leaves the room as if overwhelmed with confusion;—the Crichton greeting his exit with a laugh. Presently he returns, followed by a footman carrying an armful of books. These are deposited on the table. The young gentleman, now, referring to some penciled notes which he had been secretly taking during the Crichton's display of erudition, pins the latter to his statements, each by each, and refutes them all in turn, by reference to the very authorities cited by the egotist himself—whose ignorance at all points is thus made apparent.

LXIV.

A long time ago—twenty-three or four years at least—Edward C. Pinckney, of Baltimore, published an exquisite poem entitled "A Health." It was profoundly admired by the critical few, but had little circulation:—this for no better reason than that the author was born *too far South.* I quote a few lines:

> Affections are as *thoughts* to her,
> *The measures of her hours*—
> Her feelings have the fragrancy,
> The freshness of young *flowers.*
> To her the better elements
> And kindlier stars have given
> *A form so fair, that, like the air,*
> *'Tis less of Earth than Heaven.*

Now, in 1842, Mr. George Hill published "The Ruins of Athens and Other Poems,"—and from one of the "Other Poems" I quote what follows:

> And thoughts go sporting through her mind
> Like children among *flowers;*
> And deeds of gentle goodness are
> *The measures of her hours.*
>
> In soul or face she bears no trace
> Of one from Eden driven,
> *But like the rainbow seems, though born*
> *Of Earth, a part of Heaven.*

Is this plagiarism or is it *not?*—I merely ask for information.

LXV.

Had the "George Balcombe" of Professor Beverley Tucker been the work of any one born North of Mason and Dixon's line, it would have been long ago recognised as one of the very noblest fictions

ever written by an American. It is almost as good as "Caleb Williams." The manner in which the cabal of the "North American Review" first write all our books and then review them, puts me in mind of the fable about the Lion and the Painter. It is high time that the literary South took its own interests into its own charge.

LXVI.

Here is a plot which, with all its complexity, has no adaptation—no dependency;—it is involute and nothing more having all the air of G——'s wig, or the cycles and epicycles in Ptolemy's "Almagest."

LXVII.

We might give two plausible derivations of the epithet "weeping" as applied to the willow. We might say that the word has its origin in the pendulous character of the long branches, which suggest the idea of water dripping; or we might assert that the term comes from a fact in the natural history of the tree. It has a vast insensible perspiration, which, upon sudden cold, condenses, and sometimes is precipitated in a shower. Now, one might very accurately determine the bias and value of a man's powers of causality, by observing which of these two derivations he would adopt. The former is, beyond question, the true; and, for this reason—that common or vulgar epithets are universally suggested by common or immediately obvious things, without strict regard of any exactitude in application:—but the latter would be greedily seized by nine philologists out of ten, for no better cause than its *epigrammatism*—than the pointedness with which

the singular fact seems to touch the occasion. Here, then, is a subtle source of error which Lord Bacon has neglected. It is an Idol *of the Wit.*

LXVIII.

In a "Hymn for Christmas," by Mrs. Hemans, we find the following stanza:

> Oh, lovely voices of the sky
> Which hymned the Savior's birth,
> Are ye not singing still on high,
> Ye that sang "Peace on Earth?"
> To us yet speak the strains
> Wherewith, in times gone by,
> Ye blessed the Syrian swains,
> Oh, voices of the sky!

And at page 305 of "The Christian Keepsake and Missionary Annual for 1840"—a Philadelphia Annual—we find "A Christmas Carol," by Richard W. Dodson:—the first stanza running thus:

> Angel voices of the sky!
> Ye that hymned Messiah's birth,
> Sweetly singing from on high
> "Peace Goodwill to all on earth!"
> Oh, to us impart those strains!
> Bid our doubts and fears to cease!
> Ye that cheered the Syrians,
> Cheer us with that song of peace!

LXIX.

The more there are great excellences in a work, the less am I surprised at finding great demerits. When a book is said to have many faults, nothing is decided, and I cannot tell, by this, whether it is excellent or execrable. It is said of another that it is without fault; if the account be just, the work *cannot* be excellent.—*Trublet.*

The "*cannot*" here is much too positive. The opinions of Trublet are wonderfully prevalent, but they are none the less demonstrably false. It is merely the *indolence* of genius which has given them currency. The truth seems to be that genius of the highest order lives in a state of perpetual vacillation between ambition and *the scorn of it*. The ambition of a great intellect is at best negative. It struggles—it labors—it creates—not because excellence is desirable, but because to be excelled where there exists a sense of the power to excel, is unendurable. Indeed I cannot help thinking that the *greatest* intellects (since these most clearly perceive the laughable absurdity of human ambition) remain contentedly "mute and inglorious." At all events, the *vacillation* of which I speak is the prominent feature of genius. Alternately inspired and depressed, its inequalities of mood are stamped upon its labors. This is the truth, generally—but it is a truth very different from the assertion involved in the "cannot" of Trublet. Give to genius a sufficiently enduring *motive*, and the result will be harmony, proportion, beauty, perfection—all, in this case, synonymous terms. Its supposed "inevitable" irregularities shall not be found:—for it is clear that the susceptibility to impressions of beauty —that susceptibility which is the most important element of genius—implies an equally exquisite sensitiveness and aversion to deformity. The motive —the *enduring* motive—has indeed, hitherto, fallen *rarely* to the lot of genius; but I could point to several compositions which, "without any fault," are yet "excellent"—supremely so. The world, too, is on the threshold of an epoch, wherein, with the aid of a calm philosophy, such compositions shall be ordinarily the work of that genius which is *true*.

One of the first and most essential steps, in overpassing this threshold, will serve to kick out of the world's way this very idea of Trublet—this untenable and paradoxical idea of the incompatibility of genius with *art*.

LXX.

It may well be doubted whether a single paragraph of merit can be found either in the "Koran" of Lawrence Sterne, or in the "Lacon" of Colton, of which paragraph the origin, or at least the germ, may not be traced to Seneca, to Plutarch, (through Machiavelli) to Machiavelli himself, to Bacon, to Burdon, to Burton, to Bolinbroke, to Rochefoucault, to Blazac, the author of "*La Manière de Bien Penser*," or to Bielfeld, the German, who wrote, in French, "*Les Premiers Traits de L'Erudition Universelle*."

LXXI.

A man of genius, if not permitted to choose his own subject, will do worse, in letters, than if he had talents none at all. And *here* how imperatively is he controlled! To be sure, he can write to suit himself—but in the same manner his publishers print. From the nature of our copyright laws, he has no individual powers. As for his free agency, it is about equal to that of the dean and chapter of the see-cathedral, in a British election of Bishops —an election held by virtue of the king's writ of *congé d'élire*—specifying the person to be elected.

LXXII.

To see distinctly the machinery—the wheels and pinions—of any work of Art is, unquestionably,

of itself, a pleasure, but one which we are able to enjoy only just in proportion as we do *not* enjoy the legitimate effect designed by the artist:—and, in fact, it too often happens that to reflect analytically upon Art, is to reflect after the fashion of the mirrors in the temple of Smyrna, which represent the fairest images as deformed.

LXXIII.

With the aid of a lantern I have been looking again at "Niagara and other Poems" (Lord only knows if that be the true title)—but "there's nothing in it":—at least nothing of Mr. Lord's own —nothing which is not stolen—or, (more delicately,) transfused—transmitted. By the way, Newton says a great deal about "fits of easy transmission and reflection,"* and I have no doubt that "Niagara" was put together in one of these identical fits.

LXXIV.

A remarkable work,† and one which I find much difficulty in admitting to be the composition of a woman. Not that many good and glorious things have not been the composition of women—but, because, here, the severe precision of style, the *thoroughness*, and the luminousness, are points never observable, in even the most admirable of their writings. Who is Lady Georgiana Fullerton? Who is that Countess of Dacre, who edited "Ellen Wareham,"—the most passionate of fictions—approached, only in some particulars of passion, by this? The great defect of "Ellen Middleton," lies

* Of the solar rays—in the "Optics."
† Ellen Middleton.

in the disgusting sternness, captiousness, and bullet-headedness of her husband. We cannot sympathize with her love for him. And the intense selfishness of the rejected lover precludes that compassion which is designed. Alice is a *creation* of true genius. The imagination, throughout, is of a lofty order, and the snatches of original verse would do honor to any poet living. But the chief merit, after all, is that of the *style*—about which it is difficult to say too much in the way of praise, although it has, now and then, an odd Gallicism—such as "she lost her head," meaning she grew crazy. There is much, in the whole manner of this book, which puts me in mind of "Caleb Williams."

LXXV.

The God-abstractions of the modern polytheism are nearly in as sad a state of perplexity and promiscuity as were the more substantial deities of the Greeks. Not a quality named that does not impinge upon some one other; and Porphyry admits that Vesta, Rhea, Ceres, Themis, Proserpina, Bacchus, Attis, Adonis, Silenus, Priapus, and the Satyrs, were merely different terms for the same thing. Even gender was never precisely settled. Servius on Virgil mentions a Venus with a beard. In Macrobius, too, Calvus talks of her as if she were a man; while Valerius Soranus expressly calls Jupiter "the Mother of the Gods."

LXXVI.

The next work of Carlyle will be entitled "Bow-Wow," and the title-page will have a motto from the opening chapter of the Koran: "There is *no* error in this Book."

LXXVII.

Surely M—— cannot complain of the manner in which his book has been received; for the public, in regard to it, has given him just such an assurance as Polyphemus pacified Ulysses with, while his companions were being eaten up before his eyes. "Your book, Mr. M——," says the public, "shall be—I pledge you my word—the very last that I devour."

LXXVIII.

The modern reformist Philosophy which annihilates the individual by way of aiding the mass; and the late reformist Legislation, which prohibits pleasure with the view of advancing happiness, seem to be chips of that old block of a French feudal law which, to prevent young partridges from being disturbed, imposed penalties upon hoeing and weeding.

LXXIX.

That Demosthenes "turned out very badly," appears, beyond dispute, from a passage in "*Meker de vet. et rect. Pron. Ling. Græcæ*," where we read "*Nec illi* (*Demostheni*) *turpe videbatur, optimis relictis magistris, ad canes se conferre, etc., etc.*"—that is to say, Demosthenes was not ashamed to quit good society and "*go to the dogs.*"

LXXX.

When ——— and ——— *pavoneggiarsi* about the celebrated personages whom they have "seen" in their travels, we shall not be far wrong in inferring that these celebrated personages were seen ἐχθες—as Pindar says he "saw" Archilochus, who died ages before the former was born.

LXXXI.

I cannot help thinking that romance-writers, in general, might, now and then, find their account in taking a hint from the Chinese, who, in spite of building their houses downwards, have still sense enough *to begin their books at the end.*

LXXXII.

La Harpe (who was no critic) has, nevertheless, done little more than strict justice to the fine taste and precise finish of Racine, in all that regards the minor morals of Literature. In these he as far excels Pope, as Pope the veriest dolt in his own "Dunciad."

LXXXIII.

I have sometimes amused myself by endeavoring to fancy what would be the fate of an individual gifted, or rather accursed, with an intellect *very* far superior to that of his race. Of course, he would be conscious of his superiority; nor could he (if otherwise constituted as man is) help manifesting his consciousness. Thus he would make himself enemies at all points. And since his opinions and speculations would widely differ from those of *all* mankind—that he would be considered a madman, is evident. How horribly painful such a condition! Hell could invent no greater torture than that of being charged with abnormal weakness on account of being abnormally strong.

In like manner, nothing can be clearer than that a *very* generous spirit—*truly* feeling what all merely profess—must inevitably find itself misconceived in every direction—its motives misinterpreted. Just as extremeness of intelligence would be thought

fatuity, so excess of chivalry could not fail of being looked upon as meanness in its last degree:—and so on with other virtues. This subject is a painful one indeed. That individuals *have* so soared above the plane of their race, is scarcely to be questioned; but, in looking back through history for traces of their existence, we should pass over all biographies of "the good and the great," while we search carefully the slight records of wretches who died in prison, in Bedlam, or upon the gallows.

LXXXIV.

Samuel Butler, of Hudibrastic memory, must have had a prophetic eye to the American Congress when he defined a *rabble* as—"A congregation or assembly of the States-General—every one being of a several judgment concerning whatever business be under consideration." . . . "They meet only to quarrel," he adds, "and then return home full of satisfaction *and narrative*."

LXXXV.

I have now before me a book in which the most noticeable thing is the pertinacity with which "Monarch" and "King" are printed with a capital M and a capital K. The author, it seems, has been lately presented at Court. He will employ a small *g* in future, I presume, whenever he is so unlucky as to have to speak of his God.

LXXXVI.

Were I called on to define, *very* briefly, the term "Art," I should call it "the reproduction of what the Senses perceive in Nature through the veil of

the soul." The mere imitation, however accurate, of what *is* in Nature, entitles no man to the sacred name of "Artist." Denner was no artist. The grapes of Zeuxis were *in*artistic—unless in a bird's-eye view; and not even the curtain of Parrhasius could conceal his deficiency in point of genius. I have mentioned "the *veil* of the soul." Something of the kind appears indispensable in Art. We can, at any time, double the true beauty of an actual landscape by half closing our eyes as we look at it. The naked Senses sometimes see too little—but then *always* they see too much.

LXXXVII.

With how unaccountable an obstinacy even our best writers persist in talking about "moral courage" —as if there could be any courage that was *not* moral. The adjective is improperly applied to the subject instead of the object. The energy which overcomes fear—whether fear of evil threatening the person or threatening the impersonal circumstances amid which we exist—is, of course, simply a mental energy—is, of course, simply "moral." But, in speaking of "*moral* courage" we *imply* the existence of physical. Quite as reasonable an expression would be that of "bodily thought," or of "muscular imagination."

LXXXVIII.

I have great faith in fools:—self-confidence my friends will call it:—

> Si demain, oubliant d'éclore,
> Le jour manquait, eh bien! demain
> Quelque fou trouverait encore
> Un flambeau pour le genre humain.

By the way, what with the new electric light and other matters, De Béranger's idea is not so *very* extravagant.

LXXXIX.

"He that is born to be a man," says Wieland, in his "Peregrinus Proteus," "neither should nor can be anything nobler, greater, or better than a man." The fact is, that in efforts to soar above our nature, we invariably fall below it. Your reformist demi-gods are merely devils turned inside out.

XC.

The phrase of which our poets, and more especially our orators, are so fond—the phrase "music of the spheres"—has arisen simply from a misconception of the Platonic word μουικη—which, with the Athenians, included not merely the harmonies of tune and time, but *proportion* generally. In recommending the study of "music" as "the best education for the soul," Plato referred to the cultivation of the Taste, in contradistinction from that of the Pure Reason. By the "music of the spheres" is meant the agreements—the adaptations—in a word, the proportions—developed in the astronomical laws. He had *no* allusion to music in *our* understanding of the term. The word "mosaic," which we derive from μουσικη refers, in like manner, to the proportion, or harmony of *color*, observed—or which should be observed—in the department of Art so entitled.

XCI.

Not long ago, to call a man "a great wizard," was to invoke for him fire and fagot; but now, when we wish to run our *protégé* for President, we just

dub him "a *little* magician." The fact is, that, on account of the curious modern *bouleversement* of old opinion, one cannot be too cautious of *the grounds* on which he lauds a friend or vituperates a foe.

XCII.

"Philosophy," says Hegel, "is utterly useless and fruitless, and, *for this very reason*, is the sublimest of all pursuits, the most deserving attention, and the most worthy of our zeal." This jargon was suggested, no doubt, by Tertullian's "*Mortuus est Dei filius; credibile est quia ineptum—et sepultus resurrexit; certum est quia impossibile.*"

XCIII.

A clever French writer of "Memoirs" is quite right in saying that "if the *Universities* had been willing to permit it, the disgusting old *debauché* of Teos, with his eternal Batyllis, would long ago have been buried in the darkness of oblivion."

XCIV.

It is by no means an irrational fancy that, in a future existence, we shall look upon what we think our present existence, as a dream.

XCV.

"The artist belongs to his work, not the work to the artist."—*Novalis.**

In nine cases out of ten it is pure waste of time to attempt extorting sense from a German apothegm; —or, rather, any sense and every sense may be extorted from all of them. If, in the sentence above

* The nom de plume of Von Hardenburgh.

quoted, the intention is to assert that the artist is the slave of his theme, and must conform it to his thoughts, I have no faith in the idea, which appears to me that of an essentially prosaic intellect. In the hands of the *true* artist the theme, or "work," is but a mass of clay, of which anything (within the compass of the mass and quality of the clay) may be fashioned at will, or according to the skill of the workman. The clay is, in fact, the slave of the artist. It belongs to him. His genius, to be sure, is manifested, very distinctively, in *the choice* of the clay. It should be neither fine nor coarse, abstractly —but just so fine or so coarse—just so plastic or so rigid—as may best serve the purposes of the thing to be wrought—of the idea to be made out, or, more exactly, of the impression to be conveyed. There *are* artists, however, who fancy only the *finest* material, and who, consequently, produce only the *finest* ware. It is generally very transparent and excessively brittle.

XCVI.

Tell a scoundrel, three or four times a day, that he is the pink of probity, and you make him at least the perfection of "respectability" in good earnest. On the other hand, accuse an honorable man, too pertinaciously, of being a villain, and you fill him with a perverse ambition to show you that you are not altogether in the wrong.

XCVII.

The Romans worshipped their standards; and the Roman standard happened to be an eagle. Our standard is only one-tenth of an Eagle—a Dollar—but we make all even by adoring it with tenfold devotion.

XCVIII.

A pumpkin has more angles than C——, and is altogether a cleverer thing. He is remarkable at one point only—at that of being remarkable for nothing.

XCIX.

That evil predominates over good, becomes evident, when we consider that there can be found no aged person who would be willing to relive the life he has already lived. —*Volney.*

The idea here, is not distinctly made out; for unless through the context, we cannot be sure whether the author means merely this:—that every aged person fancies he might, in a different course of life, have been happier than in the one actually lived, and, for this reason, would not be willing to live *his* life over again, *but some other life;*—or, whether the sentiment intended is this:—that if, upon the grave's brink, the choice between the expected death and the re-living the old life, were offered any aged person, that person would prefer to die. The first proposition is, perhaps, true; but the last (which is the one designed) is not only doubtful, in point of mere fact, but is of no effect, even if granted to be true, in sustaining the original proposition—that evil predominates over good. It is assumed that the aged person will not re-live his life, because he *knows* that its evil predominated over its good. The source of error lies in the word "knows"—in the assumption that we can ever be, really, in possession of the whole knowledge to which allusion is cloudily made. But there is a *seeming*—a fictitious knowledge; and this very seeming knowledge it is, of what the life has been, which incapacitates the aged person from deciding the

question on its merits. He blindly deduces a notion of the happiness of the original real life—a notion of its preponderating evil or good—from a consideration of the secondary or supposititious one. In his estimate he merely strikes a balance between *events*, and leaves quite out of the account that elastic *Hope* which is the Eos of all. Man's real life is happy, chiefly because he is ever expecting that it soon will be so. In regarding the supposititious life, however, we paint to ourselves chill certainties for warm expectations, and grievances quadrupled in being foreseen. But because we cannot avoid doing this—strain our imaginative faculties as we will—because it is so very difficult—so nearly impossible a task, to fancy the known unknown—the done unaccomplished—and because (through our inability to fancy all this) we prefer death to a secondary life—does it, in any manner, follow that the evil of the properly-considered real existence *does* predominate over the good?

In order that a just estimate be made by Mr. Volney's "aged person," and from this estimate a judicious choice:—in order, again, that from this estimate and choice, we deduce any clear comparison of good with evil in human existence, it will be necessary that we obtain the opinion, or "choice," upon this point, from an aged person, who shall be in condition to appreciate, with precision, the hopes he is naturally led to leave out of question, but which reason tells us he would as strongly experience as ever, in the absolute re-living of the life. On the other hand, too, he must be in condition to dismiss from the estimate the fears which he actually feels, and which show him bodily the ills that are to happen, but which fears, again, reason assures us he would *not*, in the absolute secondary life,

encounter. Now what mortal was ever in condition to make these allowances?—to perform impossibilities in giving these considerations their due weight? What mortal, then, was ever in condition to make a well-grounded choice? How, from an ill-grounded one, are we to make deductions which shall guide us aright? How out of error shall we fabricate truth?

C.

This reasoning is about as convincing as would be that of a traveller who, going from Maryland to New York without entering Pennsylvania, should advance this feat as an argument against Leibnitz' *Law of Continuity*—according to which nothing passes from one *state* to another without passing through all the intermediate states.

CI.

Macaulay, in his just admiration of Addison, over-rates Tickell, and does not seem to be aware how much the author of the "Elegy" is indebted to French models. Boileau, especially, he robbed without mercy, and without measure. A flagrant example is here. Boileau has the lines:

> *En vain contre "Le Cid" un ministre se ligue;*
> *Tout Paris pour Chimene a les yeux de Rodrigue.*

Tickell thus appropriates them:

> While the charm'd reader with thy thought complies,
> And views thy Rosamond with Henry's eyes.

CII.

Stolen, body and soul, (and spoilt in the stealing) from a paper *of the same title* in the "European

Magazine" for December, 1817. Blunderingly done throughout, and must have cost more trouble than an original thing. This makes paragraph 33 of my "*Chapter on American Cribbage.*" The beauty of these *exposés* must lie in the precision and unanswerability with which they are given—in day and date —in chapter and verse—and, above all, in an unveiling of the minute trickeries by which the thieves hope to disguise their stolen wares. I must soon a tale unfold, and an astonishing tale it will be. The C—— bears away the bell. The ladies, however, should positively not be guilty of these tricks;—for one has never the heart to unmask or deplume them. After all, there is this advantage in purloining one's magazine papers:—we are never forced to dispose of them under prime cost.

CIII.

Amare et sapere vix Deo conceditur, as the acute Seneca well observes.

However acute might be Seneca, still he was not sufficiently acute to say this. The sentence is often attributed to him, but is not to be found in his works. "*Semel insanavimus omnes,*" a phrase often quoted, is invariably placed to the account of Horace, and with equal error. It is from the "*De Honesto Amore*" of the Italian Mantuanus, who has

Id commune malum; semel insanavimus omnes.

In the title, "*De Honesto Amore,*" by the way, Mantuanus misconceives the force of *honestus*—just as Dryden does in his translation of Virgil's

Et quocunque Deus circum caput egit honestum;

which he renders

On whate'er side he turns his *honest* face.

CIV.

No;—he fell by his own fame. Like Richmann, he was blasted by the fires himself had sought, and obtained, from the Heavens.

CV.

How overpowering a style is that of Curran! I use "overpowering" in the sense of the English exquisite. I can imagine nothing more distressing than the extent of his eloquence.

CVI.

How radically has "Undine" been misunderstood! Beneath its obvious meaning there runs an undercurrent, simple, quite intelligible, artistically managed, and richly philosophical.

From internal evidence afforded by the book itself, I gather that the author suffered from the ills of a mal-arranged marriage—the bitter reflections thus engendered, inducing the fable.

In the contrast between the artless, thoughtless, and careless character of Undine before possessing a soul, and her serious, enwrapt, and anxious yet happy condition after possessing it,—a condition which, with all its multiform disquietudes, she still feels to be preferable to her original state,—Fouqué has beautifully painted the difference between the heart unused to *love*, and the heart which has received its inspiration.

The jealousies which follow the marriage, arising from the conduct of Bertalda, are but the natural troubles of love; but the persecutions of Kuhleborn and the other water-spirits who take umbrage at Huldbrand's treatment of his wife, are meant to picture certain difficulties from the interference of

relations in conjugal matters—difficulties which the author has himself experienced. The warning of Undine to Huldbrand—"Reproach me not upon the waters, or we part forever"—is intended to embody the truth that quarrels between man and wife are seldom or never irremediable unless when taking place in the presence of third parties. The second wedding of the knight with his gradual forgetfulness of Undine, and Undine's intense grief beneath the waters—are dwelt upon so pathetically—so passionately—that there can be no doubt of the author's personal opinions on the subject of second marriages—no doubt of his deep personal interest in the question. How thrillingly are these few and simple words made to convey his belief that the mere death of a beloved wife does not imply a separation so final or so complete as to justify an union with another!

The fisherman had loved Undine with exceeding tenderness, and it was a doubtful conclusion to his mind that the mere disappearance of his beloved child could be properly viewed as her death.

This is where the old man is endeavoring to dissuade the knight from wedding Bertalda.

I cannot say whether the novelty of the conception of "Undine," or the loftiness and purity of its ideality, or the intensity of its pathos, or the rigor of its simplicity, or the high artistical ability with which all are combined into a well-kept, well-*motivirt* whole of absolute unity of effect—is the particular chiefly to be admired.

How delicate and graceful are the transitions from subject to subject!—a point severely testing the autorial power—as, when, for the purposes of the story, it becomes necessary that the knight,

with Undine and Bertalda, shall proceed down the Danube. An ordinary novelist would have here tormented both himself and his readers, in his search for a sufficient motive for the voyage. But, in a fable such as "Undine," how all-sufficient—how well in keeping—appears the simple motive assigned!—

In this grateful union of friendship and affection, winter came and passed away; and spring, with its foliage of tender green, and its heaven of softest blue, succeeded to gladden the hearts of the three inmates of the castle. *What wonder, then, that its storks and swallows inspired them also with a disposition to travel?*

CVII.

I have at length attained the last page, which is a thing to thank God for; and all this may be logic, but I am sure it is nothing more. Until I get the means of refutation, however, I must be content to say, with the Jesuits, Le Sueur and Jacquier, that "I acknowledge myself obedient to the decrees of the Pope against the motion of the earth."

CVIII.

Not so:—The first number of the "Gentleman's Magazine" was published on the first of January, 1731; but long before this—in 1681—there appeared the "Monthly Recorder" with all the magazine features. I have a number of the "London Magazine," dated 1760;—commenced 1732, at least, but I have reason to think much earlier.

CIX.

"Rhododaphne" (who wrote it?) is brim-full of music:—e. g.

By living streams, in sylvan shades,
Where wind and wave symphonious make
Rich melody, the youths and maids
No more with choral music wake
Lone Echo from her tangled brake.

CX.

I have just finished the "Mysteries of Paris"—a work of unquestionable power—a museum of novel and ingenious incident—a paradox of childish folly and consummate skill. It has this point in common with all the "convulsive" fictions—that the incidents are *consequential* from the premises, while the premises themselves are laughably incredible. Admitting, for instance, the possibility of such a man as Rodolphe, and of such a state of society as would tolerate his perpetual interference, we have no difficulty in agreeing to admit the possibility of his accomplishing all that is accomplished. Another point which distinguishes the Sue school, is the total want of the *ars celare artem*. In effect the writer is always saying to the reader, "Now—in one moment—you shall see what you shall see. I am about to produce on you a remarkable impression. Prepare to have your imagination, or your pity, greatly excited." The wires are not only not concealed, but displayed as things to be admired, equally with the puppets they set in motion. The result is, that in perusing, for example, a pathetic chapter in the "Mysteries of Paris" we say to ourselves, without shedding a tear—"Now, here is something which will be sure to move every reader to tears." The philosophical motives attributed to Sue are absurd in the extreme. His first, and in fact his sole object, is to make an exciting, and therefore saleable book.

The cant (implied or direct) about the amelioration of society, etc., is but a very usual trick among authors, whereby they hope to add such a tone of dignity or utilitarianism to their pages as shall gild the pill of their licentiousness. The *ruse* is even more generally employed by way of engrafting a meaning upon the otherwise unintelligible. In the latter case, however, this *ruse* is an after-thought, manifested in the shape of a moral, either appended (as in Æsop) or dovetailed into the body of the work, piece by piece, with great care, but never without leaving evidence of its after-insertion.

The translation (by C. H. Town) is very imperfect, and, by a too literal rendering of idioms, contrives to destroy the whole *tone* of the original. Or, perhaps, I should say a too literal rendering of *local peculiarities of phrase*. There is one point (never yet, I believe, noticed) which, obviously, should be considered in translation. We should so render the original that *the version should impress the people for whom it is intended, just as the original impresses the people for whom it* (*the original*) *is intended*. Now, if we rigorously translate mere local idiosyncrasies of phrase (to say nothing of idioms) we inevitably distort the author's designed impression. We are sure to produce a whimsical, at least, if not always a ludicrous, effect—for novelties, in a case of this kind, are incongruities—oddities. A distinction, of course, should be observed between those peculiarities of phrase which appertain to the nation and those which belong to the author himself—for these latter will have a similar effect upon *all* nations, and should be literally translated. It is merely the general inattention to the principle here proposed which has given rise to so much international depreciation, if not positive contempt, as regards litera,

ture. The English reviews, for example, have abundant allusions to what they call the "frivolousness" of French letters—an idea chiefly derived from the impression made by the French manner merely—this manner, again, having in it nothing *essentially* frivolous, but affecting all foreigners as such (the English especially) through that oddity of which I have already assigned the origin. The French return the compliment, complaining of the British *gaucherie* in style. The phraseology of every nation has a taint of *drollery* about it in the ears of every other nation speaking a different tongue. Now, to convey the true spirit of an author, this taint should be corrected in translation. We should pride ourselves less upon literality and more upon dexterity at paraphrase. Is it not clear that, by such dexterity, *a translation may be made to convey to a foreigner a juster conception of an original than could the original itself?*

The distinction I have made between mere idioms (which, *of course*, should never be literally rendered) and "local idiosyncrasies of *phrase*," may be exemplified by a passage at page 291 of Mr. Town's translation:

> Never mind! Go in there! You will take the cloak of Calebasse. You will wrap yourself in it, etc., etc.

These are the words of a lover to his mistress, and are meant kindly, although imperatively. They embody a local peculiarity—a *French* peculiarity of phrase, and (to French ears) convey nothing dictatorial. To our own, nevertheless, they sound like the command of a military officer to his subordinate, and thus produce an effect quite different from that intended. The translation, in such case, should be a bold paraphrase. For example:—"I

must insist upon your wrapping yourself in the cloak of Calebasse."

Mr. Town's version of "The Mysteries of Paris," however, is not objectionable on the score of excessive literality alone, but abounds in misapprehensions of the author's meaning. One of the strangest errors occurs at page 368, where we read:

"From a wicked, brutal savage and riotous rascal, he has made me a kind of honest man by saying only two words to me; but these words, 'voyez vous,' were like magic."

Here "voyez vous" are made to be the two magical words spoken; but the translation should run—"these words, do you see? were like magic." The actual words described as producing the magical effect are "heart" and "honor."

Of similar character is a curious mistake at page 245.

"He is a *gueux fini* and an attack will not save him,' added Nicholas. "A—yes," said the widow.

Many readers of Mr. Town's translation have no doubt been puzzled to perceive the force or relevancy of the widow's "A—yes" in this case. I have not the original before me, but take it for granted that it runs thus, or nearly so:—"*Il est un gueux fini et un assaut ne l'intimidera pas.*" "*Un—oui!*" *dit la veuve.*

It must be observed that, in vivacious French colloquy, the *oui* seldom implies assent to the letter, but generally to the spirit, of a proposition. Thus a Frenchman usually says "yes" where an Englishman would say "no." The latter's reply, for example, to the sentence "An attack will not intimidate him," would be "No"—that is to say, "I grant you that it would not." The Frenchman,

however, answers "Yes"—meaning, "I agree with what you say—it would not." Both replies, of course, reaching, the same point, although by opposite routes. With this understanding, it will be seen that the true version of the widow's "*Un—oui!*" should be, "*One* attack, I grant you, might not," and that this *is* the version becomes apparent when we read the words immediately following—"but *every* day—*every* day it is hell!"

An instance of another class of even more reprehensible blunders, is to be found on page 297, where Bras-Rouge is made to say to a police officer—"No matter; it is not of that complain; every trade has its *disagreements*." Here, no doubt, the French is *désagrémens*—inconveniences—disadvantages—unpleasantnesses. *Désagrémens* conveys disagreements not even so nearly as, in Latin, *religio* implies religion.

I was not a little surprised, in turning over these pages, to come upon the admirable, thrice admirable story called "*Gringalet et Coupe en Deux*," which is related by *Pique-Vinaigre* to his companions in *La Force*. Rarely have I read anything of which the exquisite *skill* so delighted me. For my soul I could not suggest a fault in it—except, perhaps, that the intention of telling a *very* pathetic story is a little too transparent.

But I say that I was *surprised* in coming upon this story—and I *was* so, because one of its points has been suggested to M. Sue by a tale of my own. *Coupe en Deux* has an ape remarkable for its size strength, ferocity, and propensity to imitation. Wishing to commit a murder so cunningly that discovery would be impossible, the master of this animal teaches it to imitate the functions of a barber, and incites it to the throat of a child, under

the idea that, when the murder is discovered, it will be considered the uninstigated deed of the ape.

On first seeing this, I felt apprehensive that some of my friends would accuse me of plagiarizing from it my "Murders in the Rue Morgue." But I soon called to mind that this latter was first published in "Graham's Magazine" for April, 1841. Some years ago, "The Paris Charivari" copied my story with complimentary comments; objecting, however, to the *Rue Morgue* on the ground that no such street (to the Charivari's knowledge) existed in Paris. I do not wish, of course, to look upon M. Sue's adaptation of my property in any other light than that of a compliment. The similarity *may* have been entirely accidental.

CXI.

Has any one observed the excessively close resemblance in subject, thought, general manner and particular point, which this clever composition* bears to the "Audibras" of Butler?

CXII.

The *à priori* reasoners upon government are, of all plausible people, the most preposterous. They only argue too cleverly to permit my thinking them silly enough to be themselves deceived by their own arguments. Yet even this is possible; for there is something in the vanity of logic which addles a man's brains. Your true logician gets, in time, to be logicalized, and then, so far as regards himself, the universe is one *word*. A thing, for him, no longer exists. He deposits upon a sheet of paper a certain assemblage of syllables, and fancies that their meaning is

* The "*Satyre Menipée*."

riveted by the act of deposition. I am serious in the opinion that some such process of thought passes through the mind of the "practised" logician, as he makes note of the thesis proposed. He is not aware that he thinks in this way—but, unwittingly, he so thinks. The syllables deposited acquire, in his view, a new character. While afloat in his brain, he might have been brought to admit the possibility that these syllables were variable exponents of various phrases of thought; but he will not admit this if he once gets them upon the paper.

In a single page of "Mill," I find the word "force" employed four times; and each employment varies the idea. The fact is that *à priori* argument is much worse than useless except in the mathematical sciences, where it is possible to obtain *precise* meanings. If there is any one subject in the world to which it is utterly and radically inapplicable, that subject is Government. The *identical* arguments used to sustain Mr. Bentham's positions, might, with little exercise of ingenuity, be made to overthrow them; and, by ringing small changes on the words "leg-of-mutton," and "turnip" (changes so *gradual* as to escape detection,) I could "*demonstrate*" that a turnip was, is, and of right ought to be, a leg-of-mutton.

CXIII.

The concord of sound-and-sense principle was never better exemplified than in these lines*:—

> Ast amans charæ thalamum puellæ
> Deserit flens, et tibi verba dicit
> Aspera amplexu teneræ cupito a—
> —vulsus amicæ.

* By *M. Anton Flaminius.*

CXIV.

Miss Gould has much in common with Mary Howitt;— the characteristic trait of each being a sportive, quaint, epigrammatic grace, that keeps clear of the absurd by never employing itself upon very exalted topics. The verbal style of the two ladies is identical. Miss Gould has the more talent of the two, but is somewhat the less original. She has occasional flashes of a far higher order of merit than appertains to her ordinary manner. Her "Dying Storm" might have been written by Campbell.

CXV.

Cornelius Webbe is one of the best of that numerous school of extravaganzists who sprang from the ruins of Lamb. We must be in perfectly good humor, however, with ourselves and all the world, to be much pleased with such works as "The Man about Town," in which the harum-scarum, hyperexcursive mannerism is carried to an excess which is frequently fatiguing.

CXVI.

Nearly, if not quite the best "Essay on a Future State."* The arguments called "Deductions *from* our Reason," are, rightly enough, addressed more to the *feelings* (a vulgar term not to be done without,) than *to* our reason. The arguments deduced from Revelation are (also rightly enough) brief. The pamphlet proves nothing, of course; its theorem is not to be proved.

* A sermon on a Future State, combating the opinion that "Death is an Eternal Sleep." By Gilbert Austin. London. 1794.

CXVII.

The style is so involute,* that one cannot help fancying it must be falsely constructed. If the use of language is to convey ideas, then it is nearly as much a demerit that our words seem to be, as that they are, indefensible. A man's grammar, like Cæsar's wife, must not only be pure, but above suspicion of impurity.

CXVIII.

It is the curse of a certain order of mind, that it can never rest satisfied with the consciousness of its ability to do a thing. Not even is it content with doing it. It must both know and show how it was done.

CXIX.

Not so:—a gentleman with a pug nose is a contradiction in terms.—"Who can live idly and without manual labor, and will bear the port, charge and *countenance* of a gentleman, he alone should be called master and be taken for a gentleman."—*Sir Thomas Smith's "Commonwealth of England."*

CXX.

Here is something at which I find it impossible not to laugh;† and yet, I laugh without knowing why. That incongruity is the principle of all nonconvulsive laughter, is to my mind as clearly demonstrated as any problem in the "Principia Mathematica"; but here I cannot trace the incongruous. It is there, I know. Still I do not see it. In the meantime let me laugh.

* "Night and Morning."

† Translation of the Book of Jonah into German Hexameters. By J. G. A. Müller. Contained in the "*Memorabilien*" *von Paulus.*

CXXI.

So violent was the state of parties in England, that I was assured by several that the Duke of Marlborough was a coward and Pope a fool.—*Voltaire.*

Both propositions have since been very seriously entertained, quite independently of all party-feeling. That Pope was a fool, indeed seems to be an established point at present with the Crazyites—what else shall I call them?

CXXII.

Imitators are not, necessarily, unoriginal—except at the exact points of the imitation. Mr. Longfellow, decidedly the most audacious imitator in America, is markedly original, or, in other words, imaginative, upon the whole; and many persons have, from the latter branch of the fact, been at a loss to comprehend, and therefore, to believe, the former. Keen sensibility of appreciation—that is to say, the poetic *sentiment* (in distinction from the poetic *power*) leads almost inevitably to imitation. Thus all great poets have been gross imitators. It is, however, a mere *non distributio medii* hence to infer, that all great imitators are poets.

CXXIII.

With all his faults, however, this author is a man of respectable powers.

Thus discourses, of *William Godwin*, the "London Monthly Magazine," May, 1818.

CXXIV.

As a descriptive poet, Mr. Street is to be highly commended. He not only describes with force and

fidelity—giving us a clear conception of the thing described—but never describes what to the poet, should be nondescript. He appears, however, not at any time to have been aware that *mere* description is not poetry at all. We demand creation—ποιησις. About Mr. Street there seems to be no spirit. He is all matter—substance—what the chemists would call "simple substance"—and exceedingly simple it is.

CXXV.

I never read a personally abusive paragraph in the newspapers, without calling to mind the pertinent query propounded by Johnson to Goldsmith:—"My dear Doctor, what harm does it to a man to call him Holofernes?"

CXXVI.

Were I to consign these volumes,* altogether, to the hands of any very young friend of mine, I could not, in conscience, describe them otherwise than as "*tammulti, tam grandes, tam pretiosi codices*"; and it would grieve me much to add the "*incendite omnes illas membranas.*"†

CXXVII.

In reading some books we occupy ourselves chiefly with the thoughts of the author; in perusing others, exclusively with our own. And this‡ is one of the "others"—a suggestive book. But there are two classes of suggestive books—the positively and the negatively suggestive. The former suggest by what

* Of Voltaire.
† St. Austin *de libris Manichæis.*
‡ Mercier's "*L'ar deux mille quatre cents quarante.*"

they say; the latter by what they might and should have said. It makes little difference, after all. In either case the true book-purpose is answered.

CXXVIII.

It is observable that, in his brief account of the Creation, Moses employs the words, *Bara Elohim* (the Gods created,) no less than thirty times; using the noun in the pleural with the verb in the singular. Elsewhere, however—in Deuteronomy, for example—he employs the singular, *Eloah*.

CXXIX.

It is a thousand pities that the puny witticisms of a few professional objectors should have power to prevent, even for a year, the adoption of a name for our country. At present we have, clearly, none. There should be no hesitation about "Appalachia." In the first place, it is distinctive. "America"* is not, and can never be made so. *We* may legislate as much as we please, and assume for our country whatever name we think right—but to us it will be no name, to any purpose for which a name is needed, unless we can take it away from the regions which employ it at present. South America is "America," and will insist upon remaining so. In the second place "Appalachia" is indigenous, springing from one of the most magnificent and distinctive features of the country itself. Thirdly, in employing this word we do honor to the Aborigines, whom, hitherto, we have at all points unmercifully despoiled, assassinated and dishonored. Fourthly, the name is the

* Mr. Field, in a meeting of "The New York Historical Society," proposed that we take the name of "America," and bestow "Columbia" upon the continent.

suggestion of, perhaps, the most deservedly eminent among all the pioneers of American literature. It is but just that Mr. Irving should name the land for which, in letters, he first established a name. The last, and by far the most truly important consideration of all, however, is the music of "Appalachia" itself; nothing could be more sonorous, more liquid, or of fuller volume, while its length is just sufficient for dignity. How the guttural "Alleghania" could ever have been preferred for a moment is difficult to conceive. I yet hope to find "Appalachia" assumed.

CXXX.

The "British Spy" of Wirt seems an imitation of the "Turkish Spy," upon which Montesquieu's "Persian Letters" are also based. Marana's work was in *Italian*—Doctor Johnson errs.

CXXXI.

M——, as a matter of course, would rather be abused by the critics, than not be noticed by them at all; but he is hardly to be blamed for growling a little, now and then, over their criticisms—just as a dog might do if pelted with bones.

CXXXII.

About the "Antigone," as about all the ancient plays, there seems to me a certain *baldness*, the result of inexperience in art, but which pedantry would force us to believe the result of a studied and supremely artistic simplicity. Simplicity, indeed, is a very important feature in all true art—but *not* the simplicity which we see in the Greek drama. That of the Greek sculpture is everything

that can be desired, because here the art in itself is simplicity in itself and in its elements. The Greek sculptor chiselled his forms from what he saw before him every day, in a beauty nearer to perfection than any work of any Cleomenes in the world. But in the drama, the direct, straightforward, *un-German* Greek had no Nature so immediately presented from which to make copy. He did what he could—but I do not hesitate to say that that was exceedingly little worth. The profound sense of one or two tragic, or rather, melodramatic elements (such as the idea of inexorable Destiny)—this sense gleaming at intervals from out the darkness of the ancient stage, serves, in the very imperfection of its development, to show, not the dramatic ability, but the dramatic *in*ability of the ancients. In a word, the simple arts spring into perfection at their origin; the complex as inevitably demand the long and painfully progressive experience of ages. To the Greeks, beyond doubt, their drama *seemed* perfection—it fully answered, to them, the dramatic end, excitement, and this fact is urged as proof of their drama's perfection in itself. It need only be said, in reply, that their art and their sense of art were, necessarily, on a level.

CXXXIII.

That man is not truly brave who is afraid either to seem or to be, when it suits him, a coward.

CXXXIV.

A corrupt and impious heart—a merely prurient fancy—a Saturnian brain in which invention has only the phosphorescent glimmer of rottenness.*

* Michel Masson, author of "*Le Cœur d'une Jeune Fille.*"

Worthless, body and soul—a foul reproach to the nation that engendered and endures him—a fetid battener upon the garbage of thought—no man—a beast—a pig: Less scrupulous than a carrion-crow, and not very much less filthy than a Wilmer.

CXXXV.

If ever mortal "wreaked his thoughts upon expression," it was *Shelley*. If ever poet sang—as a bird sings—earnestly—impulsively—with utter abandonment—to himself solely—and for the mere joy of his own song—that poet was the author of "The Sensitive Plant." Of art—beyond that which is instinctive with genius—he either had little or disdained all. He *really* disdained that Rule which is an emanation from Law, because his own soul was Law in itself. His rhapsodies are but the rough notes—the stenographic memoranda of poems—memoranda which, because they were all-sufficient for his own intelligence, he cared not to be at the trouble of writing out in full for mankind. In all his works we find no conception thoroughly wrought. For this reason he is the most fatiguing of poets. Yet he wearies in saying too little rather than too much. What in him seems the diffuseness of one idea, is the conglomerate concision of many: and this species of concision it is, which renders him obscure. With such a man, to imitate was out of the question. It would have served no purpose; for he spoke to his own spirit alone, which would have comprehended no alien tongue. Thus he was profoundly original. His quaintness arose from intuitive perception of that truth to which Bacon alone has given distinct utterance:—"There is no exquisite Beauty which has not some strangeness in its

proportions." But whether obscure, original, or quaint, Shelley had no *affectations*. He was at all times sincere.

From his *ruins*, there sprang into existence, affronting the heavens, a tottering and fantastic *pagoda*, in which the salient angles, tipped with mad jangling bells, were the idiosyncratic *faults* of the original—faults which cannot be considered such in view of his purposes, but which are monstrous when we regard his works as addressed to mankind. A "school" arose—if that absurd term must still be employed—a school—a system of *rules* upon the basis of the Shelley who had none. Young men innumerable, dazzled with the glare and bewildered by the *bizarrerie* of the lightning that flickered through the clouds of "Alastor" had no trouble whatever in heaping up imitative vapors, but, for the lightning, were forced to be content with its *spectrum*, in which the *bizarrerie* appeared without the fire. Nor were mature minds unimpressed by the contemplation of a greater and more mature; and thus, gradually, into this school of all Lawlessness—of obscurity, quaintness and exaggeration—were interwoven the out-of-place didacticism of Wordsworth, and the more anomalous metaphysicianism of Coleridge. Matters were now fast verging to their worst; and at length, in *Tennyson* poetic inconsistency attained its extreme. But it was precisely this extreme (for the greatest truth and the greatest error are scarcely two points in a circle) which, following the law of all extremes, wrought in him (Tennyson) a natural and inevitable revulsion; leading him first to contemn, and secondly to investigate, his early manner, and finally to winnow, from its magnificent elements, the truest and purest of all poetical styles. But not even yet is the process

complete; and for this reason in part, but chiefly on account of the mere fortuitousness of that mental and moral combination which shall unite in one person (if *ever* it shall) the Shellyan *abandon* and the Tennysonian poetic sense, with the most profound Art (based both in Instinct and *Analysis*) and the sternest Will properly to blend and rigorously to control all—chiefly, I say, because such combination of seeming antagonisms will be only a "happy chance"—the world has never yet seen the noblest poem which, possibly, *can* be composed.

CXXXVI.

It is not *proper*, (to use a gentle word,) nor does it seem courageous, to attack our foe by name in spirit and in effect, so that all the world shall know whom we mean, while we say to ourselves, "I have not attacked this man by name in the eye, and according to the *letter*, of the law"—yet how often are men who call themselves gentlemen, guilty of this meanness! We need reform at this point of our Literary Morality:—very sorely too, at another—the system of anonymous reviewing. Not one respectable word can be said in defence of this most unfair—this most despicable and cowardly practice.

CXXXVII.

To villify a great man is the readiest way in which a little man can himself attain greatness. The Crab might never have become a Constellation but for the courage it evinced in nibbling Hercules on the heel.

CXXXVIII.

I hardly know how to account for the repeated failures of John Neal as regards the *construction* of

his works. His art is great and of a high character—but it is massive and undetailed. He seems to be either deficient in a sense of completeness, or unstable in temperament; so that he becomes wearied with his work before getting it done. He always begins well—vigorously—startlingly—proceeds by fits—much at random—now prosing, now gossiping, now running away with his subject, now exciting vivid interest; but his conclusions are sure to be hurried and indistinct; so that the reader, perceiving a falling-off where he expects a climax, is pained, and, closing the book with dissatisfaction, is in no mood to give the author credit for the vivid sensations which have been aroused *during the progress* of perusal. Of all literary foibles the most fatal, perhaps, is that of defective climax. Nevertheless, I should be inclined to rank John Neal first, or at all events second, among our men of indisputable *genius*. Is it or is it not a fact, that the air of a Democracy agrees better with mere Talent than with Genius?

CXXXIX.

Among the moralists who keep themselves erect by the perpetual swallowing of pokers, it is the fashion to decry the "fashionable" novels. These works have their demerits; but a vast influence which they exert for an undeniable good, has never yet been duly considered. "Ingenu*os* didicisse fideliter *libros*, emollit mores nec sinit esse feros." Now, the fashionable novels are just the books which most do circulate among the class *un*fashionable; and their effect in softening the worst callosities—in smoothing the most disgusting asperities of vulgarism, is prodigious. With the herd, to admire and to attempt imitation are the same thing. What if, in this case,

the manners imitated are frippery; better frippery than brutality—and, after all, there is little danger that the intrinsic value of the sturdiest iron will be impaired by a coating of even the most diaphanous gilt.

CXL.

The ancients had at least half an idea that we travelled on horseback to heaven. See a passage of Passeri "*de animæ transvectione*"—quoted by Caylus. See, also, many old tombs.

CXLI.

It is said in Isaiah, respecting Idumea, that "none shall pass through thee for ever and ever." Dr. Keith here* insists, as usual, upon understanding the passage in its most strictly literal sense. He attempts to prove that neither Burckhardt nor Irby passed *through* the country—merely penetrating to Petra, and returning. And our Mr. John Stephens entered Idumea with the deliberate design of putting the question to test. He wished to see whether it was meant that Idumea should not be passed through, and "accordingly," says he, "I passed through it from one end to the other." Here is error on all sides. In the first place, he was not sufficiently informed in the Ancient Geography to know that the Idumea which he certainly did pass through, is *not* the Idumea or Edom, intended in the prophecy—the latter lying much farther eastward. In the next place, whether he did or did not pass through the true Idumea—or whether anybody, of late days, did or did not pass through it—is a point of no consequence either to the proof or to the

* "Literal Fulfilment of the Prophecies."

disproof of the literal fulfilment of the Prophecies. For it is quite a mistake on the part of Dr. Keith—his supposition that travelling through Idumea is prohibited at all.

The words conceived to embrace the prohibition, are found in Isaiah 34 : 10, and are *Lenetsach netsachim ēin over bah:*—literally—*Lenetsach*, for an eternity; *netsachim*, of eternities; *ēin*, not; *over*, moving about; *bah*, in it. That is to say; for an eternity of eternities, (there shall) not (be any one) moving about *in it*—not *through* it. The participle *over* refers to one moving to and fro, or up and down, and is the same term which is translated "current" as an epithet of money, in Genesis 23 : 16. The prophet means only that there shall be no mark of life in the land—no living being there—no one moving up and down in it. He refers merely to its general abandonment and desolation.

In the same way we have received an erroneous idea of the meaning of Ezekiel 35: 7, where the same region is mentioned. The common version runs:—"Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth,"—a sentence which Dr. Keith views as he does the one from Isaiah; that is, he supposes it to forbid any travelling in Idumea under penalty of death; instancing Burckhardt's death shortly after his return, as confirming this supposition, on the ground that he died in consequence of the rash attempt.

Now the words of Ezekiel are:—*Venathati eth-har Sēir leshimmanah ushemamah, vehichrati mimmennu over vasal:*—literally *Venathati*, and I will give; *eth-har*, the mountain; *Sēir*, Seir; *leshimmamah*, for a desolation; *ushemamah*, and a desolation; *vehichrati*, and I will cut off; *mimmennu*, from it; *over*, him

that goeth; *vasal*, and him that returneth:—and I will give Mount Seir for an utter desolation, and I will cut off from it him that *passeth and repasseth* therein. The reference here is as in the preceding passage: allusion is made to the inhabitants of the land, as moving about in it, and actively employed in the business of life. I am sustained in the translation of *over vasal* by Gesenius S 5—vol. 2—p. 570, *Leo's Trans.*: Compare also Zachariah 7 : 14 and 9:8. There is something analogous in the Hebrew Greek phrase, at Acts, 9 : 28—*και ην μετ' αυτου εισπορευομενος και εκπορευομενος εν Ιερουσαλημ*—And he was with them in Jerusalem, coming in and going out. The Latin *versatus est* is precisely paraphrastic. The meaning is that Saul, the new convert, was on intimate terms with the true believers in Jerusalem; moving about among them to and fro, or in and out.

CXLII.

The author of "Cromwell" does better as a writer of ballads than of prose. He has fancy, and a fine conception of rhythm. But his romantico-histories have all the effervescence of his verse, without its flavor. Nothing worse than his *tone* can be invented: —turgid sententiousness, involute, spasmodically straining after effect. And to render matters worse, he is as thorough an unistylist as Cardinal Chigi, who boasted that he wrote with the same pen for half a century.

CXLIII.

Our "blues" are increasing in number at a great rate; and should be decimated, at the very least. Have we no critic with nerve enough to hang a dozen or two of them, *in terrorem?* He must use a

silk-cord, of course—as they do, in Spain, with all grandees of the *blue* blood—of the "*sangre azula.*"

CXLIV.

> For all the rhetorician's rules
> Teach nothing but to name the tools.—HUDIBRAS.

What these oft-quoted lines go to show is, that a falsity in verse will travel faster and endure longer than a falsity in prose. The man who would sneer or stare at a silly proposition nakedly put, will admit that "there is a good deal in that" when "*that*" is the point of an epigram shot into the ear. The rhetorician's rules—if they *are* rules—teach him not only to name his tools, but to use his tools, the capacity of his tools—their extent—their limit; and from an examination of the nature of the tools—(an examination forced on him by their constant presence)—force him, also, into scrutiny and comprehension of the material on which the tools are employed, and thus, finally, suggest and give birth to new material for new tools.

CXLV.

Among his *eidola* of the den, the tribe, the forum, the theatre, etc., Bacon might well have placed the great *eidolon* of the parlor (or of the wit, as I have termed it in one of the previous Marginalia) the idol whose worship blinds man to truth by dazzling him with the *apposite*. But what title could have been invented for *that* idol which has propagated, perhaps, more of gross error than all combined?—the one, I mean, which demands from its votaries that they reciprocate cause and effect—reason in a circle—lift themselves from the ground by pulling

up their pantaloons—and carrying themselves on their own heads, in hand-baskets, from Beersheba to Dan.

All—absolutely all the argumentation which I have seen on the nature of the soul, or of the Deity, seems to me nothing but worship of this unnameable idol. *Pour savoir ce qu'est Dieu*, says Bielfeld, although nobody listens to the solemn truth, *il faut être Dieu même*—and to reason about the reason is of all things the most unreasonable. At least, he alone is fit to discuss the topic who perceives at a glance the insanity of its discussion.

CXLVI.

I believe it is Montaigne who says—"People talk about thinking, but, for my part, I never begin to think until I sit down to write." A better plan for him would have been, never to sit down to write until he had made an end of thinking.

CXLVII.

No doubt, the association of idea is somewhat singular—but I never can hear a crowd of people singing and gesticulating, all together, at an Italian opera, without fancying myself at Athens, listening to that particular tragedy, by Sophocles, in which he introduces a full chorus of turkeys, who set about bewailing the death of Meleager. It is noticeable in this connexion, by the way, that there is not a goose in the world who, in point of sagacity, would not feel itself insulted in being compared with a turkey. The French seem to feel this. In Paris, I am sure, no one would think of saying to Mr. F——, "What a goose you are!"—"Quel *dindon* tu es!" would be the phrase employed as equivalent.

CXLVIII.

Alas! how many American critics neglect the happy suggestion of M. Timon—"*que le ministre de L'Instruction Publique doit lui-même savoir parler Francais.*"

CXLIX.

It is folly to assert, as some at present are fond of asserting, that the Literature of any nation or age was ever injured by plain speaking on the part of the Critics. As for American Letters, plain-speaking about *them* is, simply, the one thing needed. They are in a condition of absolute quagmire—a quagmire, to use the words of Victor Hugo, *d'où on ne peut se tirer par des periphrases—par des quemadmodums et des verumenimveros.*

CL.

It is certainly very remarkable that although destiny is the ruling idea of the Greek drama, the word Τυχη (Fortune) does not appear once in the whole Iliad.

CLI.

Had John Bernouilli lived to have the experience of Fuller's occiput and sinciput, he would have abandoned, in dismay, his theory of the non-existence of hard bodies.

CLII.

They have ascertained, in China, that the abdomen is the seat of the soul; and the acute Greeks considered it a waste of words to employ more than a single term, φρενες, for the expression both of the mind and of the diaphragm.

CLIII.

Mr. Grattan, who, in general, writes well, has a bad habit of loitering—of toying with his subject, as a cat with a mouse, instead of grasping it firmly at once, and devouring it without ado. He takes up too much time in the ante-room. He has never done with his introductions. Sometimes one introduction is merely the vestibule to another; so that by the time he arrives at his main theme, there is none of it left. He is afflicted with a perversity common enough even among otherwise good talkers—an irrepressible desire of tantalizing by circumlocution.

If the greasy print here exhibited is, indeed, like Mr. Grattan,* then is Mr. Grattan like nobody else—for who else ever thrust forth, from beneath a wig of wire, the countenance of an over-done apple dumpling?

CLIV.

"What does a man learn by travelling?" demanded Doctor Johnson, one day, in a great rage—"What did Lord Charlemont learn in his travels, except that there was a snake in one of the pyramids of Egypt?"—but had Doctor Johnson lived in the days of the Silk Buckinghams, he would have seen that, so far from thinking anything of finding a snake in a pyramid, your traveller would take his oath, at a moment's notice, of having found a pyramid in a snake.

CLV.

The author of "*Miserrimus*" *might have been* W. G. Simms (whose "*Martin Faber*" is just such a

* "High-Ways and By-Ways."

work)—but *is** G. M. W. Reynolds, an Englishman, who wrote, also, "*Albert de Rosann*," and "Pickwick Abroad"—both excellent things in their way.

CLVI.

L—— is busy in attempting to prove that his play was not fairly d——d—that it is only "skotched, not killed"; but if the poor play could speak from the tomb, I fancy it would sing with the opera heroine:

> The flattering error cease to prove!
> Oh, *let* me be deceased!

CLVII.

We may safely grant that the *effects* of the oratory of Demosthenes were vaster than those wrought by the eloquence of any modern, and yet not controvert the idea that the modern eloquence, itself, is superior to that of the Greek. The Greeks were an excitable, *unread* race, for they had no printed books. *Vivâ voce* exhortations carried with them, to their quick apprehensions, all the gigantic force of *the new*. They had much of that vivid interest which the first fable has upon the dawning intellect of the child—an interest which is worn away by the frequent perusal of similar things—by the frequent inception of similar fancies. The suggestions, the arguments, the incitements of the ancient rhetorician were, when compared with those of the modern, absolutely novel; possessing thus an immense adventitious force—a force which has been, oddly enough, left out of sight in all estimates of the eloquence of the two eras.

The finest philippic of the Greek would have been

* [Mr. Poe was wrong. "Miserrimus" was written by W. M. Reynolds, who died at Fontainbleau in 1850. Ed.]

hooted at in the British House of Peers, while an impromptu of Sheridan, or of Brougham, would have carried by storm all the hearts and all the intellects of Athens.

CLVIII.

Much has been said, of late, about the necessity of maintaining a proper *nationality* in American Letters; but what this nationality *is*, or what is to be gained by it, has never been distinctly understood. That an American should confine himself to American themes, or even prefer them, is rather a political than a literary idea—and at best is a questionable point. We would do well to bear in mind that "distance lends enchantment to the view." *Ceteris paribus*, a foreign theme is, in a strictly literary sense, to be preferred. After all, the world at large is the only legitimate stage for the autorial *histrio*.

But of the need of *that* nationality which defends our own literature, sustains our own men of letters, upholds our own dignity, and depends upon our own resources, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. Yet here is the very point at which we are most supine. We complain of our want of an International Copyright, on the ground that this want justifies our publishers in inundating us with British opinion in British books: and yet when these very publishers at their own obvious risk, and even obvious loss, do publish an American book, we turn up our noses at it with supreme contempt (this is a general thing) until it (the American book) has been dubbed "readable" by some illiterate Cockney critic. Is it too much to say that, with us, the opinion of Washington Irving—of Prescott—of Bryant—is a mere nullity in comparison with that of any anony-

mous sub-sub-editor of the Spectator, the Athenæum, or the "London Punch"? It is *not* saying too much, to say this. It is a solemn—an absolutely awful act. Every publisher in the country will admit it to be a fact. There is not a more disgusting spectacle under the sun than our subserviency to British criticism. It is disgusting, first, because it is truckling, servile, pusillanimous—secondly, because of its gross irrationality. We *know* the British to bear us little but ill will—we know that, in no case, do they utter unbiased opinions of American books—we know that in the few instances in which our writers have been treated with common decency in England, these writers have either openly paid homage to English institutions, or have had lurking at the bottom of their hearts a secret principle at war with Democracy: —we *know* all this, and yet, day after day, submit our necks to the degrading yolk of the crudest opinion that emanates from the fatherland. Now if we *must* have nationality, let it be a nationality that will throw off this yoke.

The chief of the rhapsodists who have ridden us to death like the Old Man of the Mountain, is the ignorant and egotistical Wilson. We use the term rhapsodists with perfect deliberation; for, Macaulay, and Dilke, and one or two others, excepted, there is not in Great Britain a critic who can be fairly considered worthy the name. The Germans, and even the French, are infinitely superior. As regards Wilson, no man ever penned worse criticism or better rhodomontade. That he is "egotistical" his works show to all men, running as they read. That he is "ignorant" let his absurd and continuous schoolboy blunders about Homer bear witness. Not long ago we ourselves pointed out a series of similar inanities in his review of Miss Barrett's poems—a series,

we say, of gross blunders, arising from sheer ignorance—and we defy him or any one to answer a single syllable of what we then advanced.

And yet this is the man whose simple *dictum* (to our shame be it spoken) has the power to make or to mar any American reputation! In the last number of Blackwood, he has a continuation of the dull "Specimens of the British Critics," and makes occasion wantonly to insult one of the noblest of our poets, Mr. Lowell. The point of the whole attack consists in the use of slang epithets and phrases of the most ineffably vulgar description. "Squabashes" is a pet term. "Faugh!" is another. "We are Scotsmen to *the spine!*" says Sawney—as if the thing were not more than self-evident. Mr. Lowell is called "a magpie," an "ape," a "Yankee cockney," and his name is intentionally miswritten *John* Russell Lowell. Now were these indecencies perpetrated by an American critic, that critic would be sent to Coventry by the whole press of the country, but since it is Wilson who insults, we, as in duty bound, not only submit to the insult, but echo it, as an excellent jest, throughout the length and breadth of the land. *Quamdiu Catilina?* We do indeed demand the nationality of self-respect. In Letters as in Government we require a Declaration of Independence. A better thing still would be a Declaration of War—and that war should be carried forthwith "into Africa."

CLIX.

The Doctor has excited great attention in America as well as in England, and has given rise to every variety of conjecture and opinion, not only concerning the author's individuality, but in relation to the

meaning, purpose, and character of the book itself. It is now said to be the work of one author—now of two, three, four, five—as far even as nine or ten. These writers are sometimes thought to have composed the *Doctor* conjointly—sometimes to have written each a portion. These individual portions have even been pointed out by the supremely acute, and the names of their respective fathers assigned. Supposed discrepancies of taste and manner, together with the prodigal introduction of mottoes, and other scraps of erudition (apparently beyond the compass of a single individual's reading) have given rise to this idea of a multiplicity of writers—among whom are mentioned in turn all the most witty, all the most eccentric, and especially all the most learned of Great Britain. Again—in regard to the nature of the book. It has been called an imitation of Sterne—an august and most profound exemplification, under the garb of eccentricity, of some all-important moral law—a true, under guise of a fictitious, biography—a simple jeu d'esprit—a mad farrago by a Bedlamite, and a great multiplicity of other equally fine names and hard. Undoubtedly, the best method of arriving at a decision in relation to a work of this nature, is to read it through with attention, and thus see what can be made of it. We have done so, and can make nothing of it, and are therefore clearly of opinion that the *Doctor* is precisely—nothing. We mean to say that it is nothing better than *a hoax*.

That any serious truth is meant to be inculcated by a tissue of bizarre and disjointed rhapsodies, whose *general* meaning no person can fathom, is a notion altogether untenable, unless we suppose the author a madman. But there are none of the proper evidences of madness in the book—while

of mere *banter* there are instances innumerable. One-half, at least, of the entire publication is taken up with palpable quizzes, reasonings in a circle, sentences, like the nonsense verses of Du Bartas, evidently framed to mean nothing, while wearing an air of profound thought, and grotesque speculations in regard to the probable excitement to be created by the book.

It appears to have been written with a sole view (or nearly with the sole view) of exciting inquiry and comment. That this object should be fully accomplished cannot be thought very wonderful, when we consider the excessive trouble taken to accomplish it, by vivid and powerful intellect. That the *Doctor* is the offspring of such intellect, is proved sufficiently by many passages of the book, where the writer appears to have been led off from his main design. That it is written by more than one man should not be deduced either from the apparent immensity of its erudition, or from discrepancies of style. That man is a desperate mannerist who cannot vary his style *ad infinitum;* and although the book *may* have been written by a number of learned *bibliophagi*, still there is, we think, nothing to be found in the book itself at variance with the possibility of its being written by any one individual of even mediocre reading. Erudition is only certainly known in its *total* result. The mere grouping together of mottoes from the greatest multiplicity of the rarest works, or even the apparently natural inweaving into any composition, of the sentiments and manner of these works, are attainments within the reach of any well-informed, ingenious and industrious man having access to the great libraries of London. Moreover, while a single individual possessing these requisites

and opportunities, might, through a rabid desire of *creating a sensation*, have written, with some trouble, the Doctor, it is by no means easy to imagine that a plurality of sensible persons could be found willing to embark in such absurdity from a similar, or indeed from any imaginable inducement.

The present edition of the Harpers consists of two volumes in one. Volume one commences with a *Prelude of Mottoes* occupying two pages. Then follows a *Postscript*—then a *Table of Contents to the first volume*, occupying eighteen pages. Volume two has a similar *Prelude of Mottoes* and *Table of Contents*. The whole is subdivided into Chapters Ante-Initial, Initial, and Post-Initial, with Inter-Chapters. The pages have now and then a typographical *queerity*—a monogram, a scrap of grotesque music, old English, &c. Some characters of this latter kind are printed with colored ink in the British edition, which is gotten up with great care. All these oddities are in the manner of Sterne, and some of them are exceedingly well conceived. The work professes to be a Life of one Doctor Daniel Dove and his horse Nobs—but we should put no very great faith in this biography. On the back of the book is a monogram—which appears again once or twice in the text, and whose solution is a fertile source of trouble with all readers. This monogram is a triangular pyramid; and as, in geometry, the solidity of every polyedral body may be computed by dividing the body into pyramids, the pyramid is thus considered as the base or essence of every polyedron. The author then, after his own fashion, may mean to imply that his book is the basis of all solidity or wisdom—or perhaps, since the polyedron is not only a solid, but a solid terminated by *plane faces*, that the *Doctor* is the very

essence of all that spurious wisdom which will terminate in just nothing at all—in a hoax, and a consequent multiplicity of *blank visages*. The wit and humor of the *Doctor* have seldom been equalled. We cannot think Southey wrote it, but have no idea who did.

CLX.

These twelve Letters* are occupied, in part, with minute details of such atrocities on the part of the British, during their sojourn in Charleston, as the quizzing of Mrs. Wilkinson and the pilfering of her shoe-buckles—the remainder being made up of the indignant comments of Mrs. Wilkinson herself.

It is very true, as the Preface assures us, that "few records exist of American women either before or during the war of the Revolution, and that those perpetuated by History want the charm of personal narration,"—but then we are all well delivered from such charms of personal narration as we find here. The only supposable merit in the compilation is that dogged air of truth with which the fair authoress relates the lamentable story of her misadventures. I look in vain for that "useful information" about which I have heard—unless, indeed, it is in the passage where we are told that the letter-writer "was a young and beautiful widow; that her handwriting is clear and feminine; and that the letters were copied by herself into a blank quarto book, on which the extravagant sale-price marks one of the features of the times:"—there are other extravagant sale-prices, however, besides that;—it was seventy-five cents that I paid for these "Letters." Besides,

* "Letters of Eliza Wilkinson, during the invasion and possession of Charleston, S. C., by the British, in the Revolutionary War." Arranged by Caroline Gilman.

they are silly, and I cannot conceive why Mrs. Gilman thought the public wished to read them. It is really too bad for her to talk at a body, in this style, about "gathering relics of past history," and "floating down streams of time."

As for Mrs. Wilkinson, I am rejoiced that she lost her shoe buckles.

CLX.

Advancing briskly with a rapier, he *did the business* for him at a blow.—*Smollett.*

This vulgar colloquialism had its type among the Romans, *Et ferro subitus grassatus, agit rem.*—*Juvenal.*

CLXI.

It cannot, we think, be a matter of doubt with any reflecting mind, that at least one-third of the *reverence*, or of the *affection*, with which we regard the elder poets of Great Britain, should be credited to what is, in itself, a thing apart from poetry—we mean to the simple love of the antique—and that again a third of even the proper *poetic sentiment* inspired by these writings should be ascribed to a fact which, while it has a strict connexion with poetry in the abstract, and also with the particular poems in question, must not be looked upon as a merit appertaining to the writers of the poems. Almost every devout reader of the old English bards, if demanded his opinion of their productions, would mention vaguely, yet with perfect sincerity, a sense of dreamy, wild, indefinite, and, he would perhaps say, undefinable delight. Upon being required to point out the source of this so shadowy pleasure, he would be apt to speak of the quaint

in phraseology and of the grotesque in rhythm. And this quaintness and grotesqueness are, as we have elsewhere endeavored to show, very powerful, and, if well managed, very admissible adjuncts to ideality. But in the present instance they arise independently of the author's will, and are matters altogether apart from his intention.

CLXII.

As to this last term ("high-binder") which is so confidently quoted as modern ("not in use, *certainly*, before 1819,") I can refute all that is said by referring to a journal in my own possession—"The Weekly Inspector," for Dec. 27, 1806—published in New York:

> On Christmas Eve, a party of banditti, amounting, it is stated, to forty or fifty members of an association, calling themselves "*High-Binders*," assembled in front of St. Peter's Church, in Barclay-street, expecting that the Catholic ritual would be performed with a degree of pomp and splendor which has usually been omitted in this city. These ceremonies, however, not taking place, the High-Binders manifested great displeasure.

In a subsequent number, the association are called "Hide-Binders." They were Irish.

CLXIII.

Perhaps Mr. Barrow* is right after all, and the dearth of genius in America *is* owing to the continual teasing of the musquitoes.

CLXIV.

The title of this book† deceives us. It is by no means "talk" as men understand it—not that true

* "Voyage to Cochin-China."
† "Coleridge's Table-Talk."

talk of which Boswell has been the best historiographer. In a word it is not *gossip*, which has been never better defined than by Basil, who calls it "talk for talk's sake," nor more thoroughly comprehended than by Horace Walpole and Mary Wortley Montague, who made it a profession and a purpose. Embracing all things, it has neither beginning, middle, nor end. Thus of the gossipper it was not properly said that "he commences his discourse by jumping *in medias res*." For, clearly, your gossipper commences not at all. He is begun. He is already begun. He is always begun. In the matter of end he is indeterminate. And by these extremes shall ye know him to be of the Cæsars—*porphyrogenitus*—of the right vein—of the true blood—of the blue blood—of the *sangre azula*. As for laws, he is cognizant of but one, the invariable absence of all. And for his road, were it as straight as the Appia and as broad as that "which leadeth to destruction," nevertheless would he be malcontent without a frequent hop-skip-and-jump, over the hedges, into the tempting pastures of digression beyond. Such is the gossipper, and of such alone is the true *talk*. But when Coleridge asked Lamb if he had ever heard him *preach*, the answer was quite happy—"I have never heard you do anything else." The truth is that "Table Discourse" *might* have answered as a title to this book; but its character can be fully conveyed only in "Post-Prandian Sub-Sermons," or "Three Bottle Sermonoids."

CLXV.

A rather bold and quite unnecessary plagiarism—from a book too well known to promise impunity.

It is now full time to begin to brush away the insects of literature, whether creeping or fluttering, which have too long crawled over and soiled the intellectual ground of this country. It is high time to shake the little sickly stems of many a puny plant, and make its fading flowerets fall.—*Monthly Register, p. 243, Vol. 2, New York, 1807.*

On the other hand—

I have brushed away the insects of literature, whether fluttering or creeping; I have shaken the little stems of many a puny plant, and the flowerets have fallen.—*Preface to the Pursuits of Literature.*

CLXVI.

Men of genius are far more abundant than is supposed. In fact, to appreciate thoroughly the work of what we call genius, is to possess all the genius by which the work was produced. But the person appreciating may be utterly incompetent to reproduce the work, or anything similar, and this solely through lack of what may be termed the constructive ability—a matter quite independent of what we agree to understand in the term "genius" itself. This ability is based, to be sure, in great part, upon the faculty of analysis, enabling the artist to get full view of the machinery of his proposed effect, and thus work it and regulate it at will; but a great deal depends also upon properties strictly moral—for example, upon patience, upon concentrativeness, or the power of holding the attention steadily to the one purpose, upon self-dependence and contempt for all opinion which is opinion and no more—in especial, upon energy or industry. So vitally important is this last, that it may well be doubted if anything to which we have been accustomed to give the title of a "work of genius" was ever accomplished without it; and it is

chiefly because this quality and genius are nearly incompatible, that "works of genius" are few, while mere men of genius are, as I say, abundant. The Romans, who excelled us in acuteness of *observation*, while falling below us in induction from facts observed, seem to have been so fully aware of the inseparable connexion between industry and a "work of genius," as to have adopted the error that industry, in great measure, was genius itself. The highest compliment is intended by a Roman, when, of an epic, or anything similar, he says that it is written *industriâ mirabili* or *incredibili industriâ*.

CLXVII.

The merely mechanical style of "Athens" is far better than that of any of Bulwer's previous books. In general he is atrociously involute—this is his main defect. He wraps one sentence in another *ad infinitum*—very much in the fashion of those "nests of boxes" sold in our wooden ware-shops, or like the islands within lakes, within islands within lakes, within islands within lakes, of which we read so much in the "Periplus" of Hanno.

CLXVIII.

All true men must rejoice to perceive the decline of the miserable rant and cant against originality, which was so much in vogue a few years ago among a class of microscopical critics, and which at one period threatened to degrade all American literature to the level of Flemish art.

Of puns it has been said that those most dislike who are least able to utter them; but with far more of truth may it be asserted that invectives against originality proceed only from persons at once

hypocritical and commonplace. I say hypocritical —for the love of novelty is an indisputable element of the moral nature of man; and since to be original is merely to be novel, the dolt who professes a distaste for originality, in letters or elsewhere, proves in no degree his aversion for the thing in itself, but merely that uncomfortable hatred which ever arises in the heart of an envious man for an excellence he cannot hope to attain.

CLXIX.

When I call to mind the preposterous "asides" and soliloquies of the drama among civilized nations, the shifts employed by the Chinese playwrights appear altogether respectable. If a general, on a Pekin or Canton stage, is ordered on an expedition, "he brandishes a whip," says Davis, "or takes in his hand the reins of a bridle, and striding three or four times around a platform, in the midst of a tremendous crash of gongs, drums, and trumpets, finally stops short and tells the audience where he has arrived." It would sometimes puzzle an European stage hero in no little degree to "tell an audience where he has arrived." Most of them seem to have a very imperfect conception of their whereabouts. In the "Mort de Cæsar," for example, Voltaire makes his populace rush to and fro, exclaiming, "*Courons au Capitole!*" Poor fellows—they are in the capitol all the time;—in his scruples about unity of place, the author has never once let them out of it.

CLXX.

Sallust, too. He had much the same free-and-easy idea, and Metternich himself could not have

quarrelled with his "*Impune quæ libet facele, id est esse regem.*"

CLXXI.

A ballad entitled "*Indian Serenade*," and put into the mouth of the hero, Vasco Nunez, is, perhaps, the most really meritorious portion of Mr. Simms' "Damsel of Darien." This stanza is full of music:

> And their wild and mellow voices
> Still to hear along the deep,
> Every brooding star rejoices,
> While the billow, on its pillow,
> Lulled to silence seems to sleep.

And also this:

> 'Tis the wail for life they waken
> By Samana's yielding shore—
> With the tempest it is shaken;
> The wild ocean is in motion,
> And the song is heard no more.

CLXXII.

Here is a man who is a scholar and an artist, who knows precisely how every effect has been produced by every great writer, and who is resolved to reproduce them. But the heart passes by his pitfalls and traps, and carefully-planned springs, to be taken captive by some simple fellow who expected the event as little as did his prisoner.*

Perhaps I err in quoting these words as the author's own—they are in the mouth of one of his interlocutors—but whoever claims them, they are poetical and no more. The error is exactly that common one of separating practice from the theory which includes it. In all cases, if the practice fail,

* Lowell's "Conversations."

it is because the theory is imperfect. If Mr. Lowell's heart be not caught in the pitfall or trap, then the pitfall is ill-concealed and the trap is not properly baited or set. One who has *some artistical ability* may know how to do a thing, and even show how to do it, and yet fail in doing it after all; but the artist and the man of some artistic ability must not be confounded. He only is the former who can carry his most shadowy precepts into successful application. To say that a critic could not have written the work which he criticises, is to put forth a contradiction in terms.

CLXXIII.

Talking of conundrums:—Why will a geologist put no faith in the fable of the fox that lost his tail? Because he knows that no animal remains have ever been found in trap.

CLXXIV.

We have long learned to reverence the fine intellect of Bulwer. We take up any production of his pen with a positive certainty that, in reading it, the wildest passions of our nature, the most profound of our thoughts, the brightest visions of our fancy, and the most ennobling and lofty of our aspirations will, in due turn, be enkindled within us. We feel sure of rising from the perusal a wiser if not a better man. In no instance are we deceived. From the brief tale—from the "Monos and Daimonos" of the author—to his most ponderous and labored novels—all is richly, and glowingly intellectual—all is energetic, or astute, or brilliant, or profound. There *may* be men now living who possess the power of Bulwer—but it is quite evident that very few

have made that power so palpably manifest. Indeed we know of *none*. Viewing him as a novelist—a point of view exceedingly unfavorable (if we hold to the common acceptation of "the novel") for a proper contemplation of his genius—he is unsurpassed by any writer living or dead. Why should we hesitate to say this, feeling, as we do, thoroughly persuaded of its truth. Scott has excelled him in *many* points, and "The Bride of Lammormuir" is a better book than any individual work by the author of Pelham—"Ivanhoe" is, perhaps, equal to any. Descending to particulars, D'Israeli has a more brilliant, a more lofty, and a more delicate (we do not say a *wilder*) imagination. Lady Dacre has written Ellen Wareham, a more forcible tale of passion. In some species of wit Theodore Hook rivals, and in broad humor our own Paulding surpasses him. The writer of "Godolphin" equals him in energy. Banim is a better sketcher of character. Hope is a richer colorist. Captain Trelawney is as original—Moore is as fanciful, and Horace Smith is as learned. But who is there uniting in one person the imagination, the passion, the humor, the energy, the knowledge of the heart, the artist-like eye, the originality, the fancy, and the learning of Edward Lytton Bulwer? In a vivid wit—in profundity and a Gothic massiveness of thought—in style—in a calm certainty and definitiveness of purpose—in industry—and above all, in the power of controlling and regulating by volition his illimitable faculties of mind, he is unequalled—he is unapproached.

CLXXV.

The author of "Richelieu" and "Darnley" is lauded, by a great majority of those who laud him,

from mere motives of duty, not of inclination—duty erroneously conceived. He is looked upon as the head and representative of those novelists who, in historical romance, attempt to blend interest with instruction. His sentiments are found to be pure—his *morals* unquestionable, and pointedly shown forth—his language indisputably correct. And for all this, praise, assuredly, but then only a certain degree of praise, should be awarded him. To be pure in his expressed opinions is a duty; and were his language as correct as any spoken, he would speak only as every gentleman should speak. In regard to his historical information, were it much more accurate, and twice as extensive as, from any visible indications, we have reason to believe it, it should still be remembered that similar attainments are possessed by many thousands of well-educated men of all countries, who look upon their knowledge with no more than ordinary complacency; and that a far, very far higher reach of erudition is within the grasp of any general reader having access to the great libraries of Paris or the Vatican. Something more than we have mentioned is necessary to place our author upon a level with the best of the English novelists—for here his admirers would desire us to place him. Had Sir Walter Scott never existed, and Waverley never been written, we would not, of course, award Mr. J. the merit of being the first to blend history, even successfully, with fiction. But as an indifferent imitator of the Scotch novelist in this respect, it is unnecessary to speak of the author of "Richelieu" any farther. To genius of any kind, it seems to us, that he has little pretension. In the solemn tranquillity of his pages we seldom stumble across a novel emotion, and if any matter of deep interest arises in the path, we

are pretty sure to find it an interest appertaining to some historical fact equally vivid or more so in the original chronicles.

CLXXVI.

Jack Birkenhead, *apud* Bishop Sprat, says that "a great wit's great work is to refuse." The apophthegm must be swallowed *cum grano salis*. His greatest work is to originate no matter that shall require refusal.

CLXXVII.

"Frequently since his recent death," says the American editor of Hood, "he has been called a great author—a phrase used not inconsiderately or in vain." Yet, if we adopt the conventional idea of "a great author," there has lived, perhaps, no writer of the last half century who, with equal notoriety, was less entitled than Hood to be so called. In fact, he was a literary merchant, whose main stock in trade was *littleness;* for, during the larger portion of his life, he seemed to breathe only for the purpose of perpetrating puns—things of so despicable a platitude that the man who is capable of habitually committing them, is seldom found capable of anything else. Whatever merit *may* be discovered in a pun, arises altogether from *unexpectedness*. This is the pun's element and is twofold. First, we demand that the *combination* of the pun be unexpected; and, secondly, we require the most entire unexpectedness in the pun *per se*. A rare pun, rarely appearing, is, to a certain extent, a pleasurable effect; but to no mind, however debased in taste, is a continuous effort at punning otherwise than unendurable. The man who main-

tains that he derives gratification from any such chapters of punnage as Hood was in the daily practice of committing to paper, should not be credited upon oath.

The puns of the author of "Fair Inez," however, are to be regarded as the weak points of the man. Independently of their ill effect, in a literary view, as mere puns, they leave upon us a painful impression; for too evidently they are the hypochondriac's struggles at mirth—the grinnings of the death's head. No one can read his "Literary Reminiscences" without being convinced of his habitual despondency:—and the species of false wit in question is precisely of that character which would be adopted by an author of Hood's temperament and cast of intellect, when compelled to write at an emergency. That his heart had no interest in these *nïäiseries*, is clear. I allude, of course, to his *mere* puns for the pun's sake—a class of letters by which he attained his widest renown. That he did *more* in this way than in any other, is but a corollary from what I have already said, for, generally, he was unhappy, and almost continually he wrote *invitâ Minerva*. But his true province was a very rare and ethereal *humor*, in which the mere pun was left out of sight, or took the character of the richest *grotesquerie;* impressing the imaginative reader with remarkable force, as if by a new phase of the ideal. It is in this species of brilliant, or, rather, *glowing* grotesquerie, uttered with a rushing *abandon* vastly heightening its effect, that Hood's marked originality mainly consisted:—and it is this which entitles him, at times, to the epithet "great":—for *that* undeniably may be considered great (of whatever seeming littleness in itself) which is capable of inducing intense emotion in the minds

or hearts of those who are themselves undeniably great.

The field in which Hood is *distinctive* is a borderland between Fancy and Fantasy. In this region he reigns supreme. Nevertheless, he has made successful and frequent incursions, although vacillatingly, into the domain of the true Imagination. I mean to say that he is never truly or purely imaginative for more than a paragraph at a time. In a word, his peculiar genius was the result of vivid *Fancy* impelled by Hypochondriasis.

CLXXVIII.

There is an old German chronicle about Reynard the Fox, when crossed in love—about how he desired to turn hermit, but could find no spot in which he could be "thoroughly alone," until he came upon the desolate fortress of Malspart. He should have taken to reading the "American Drama" of "Witchcraft." I fancy he would have found himself "thoroughly alone" in that.

CLXXIX.

Since it has become fashionable to trundle houses about the streets, should there not be some remodelling of the legal definition of reality, as "that which is permanent, fixed, and immovable, that cannot be carried out of its place?" According to this, a house is by no means real estate.

CLXXX.

The enormous multiplication of books in every branch of knowledge, is one of the greatest evils of this age; since it presents one of the most serious obstacles to the acquisition of correct information,

by throwing in the reader's way piles of lumber, in which he must painfully grope for the scraps of useful matter, peradventure interspersed.

CLXXXI.

That Professor Wilson is one of the most gifted and altogether one of the most remarkable men of his day, few persons will be weak enough to deny. His ideality—his enthusiastic appreciation of the beautiful, conjoined with a temperament compelling him into action and expression, has been the root of his preeminent success. Much of it, undoubtedly, must be referred to that so-called moral courage which is but the consequence of the temperament in its physical elements. In a word, Professor Wilson is what he is, because he possesses ideality, energy and audacity, each in a very unusual degree. The first, almost unaided by the two latter, has enabled him to produce much impression, as a poet, upon the secondary or tertiary grades of the poetic comprehension. His "Isle of Palms" appeals effectively to all those poetic intellects in which the poetic predominates greatly over the intellectual element. It is a composition which delights through the glow of its imagination, but which repels (comparatively, of course) through the *niaiseries* of its general conduct and construction. As a critic, Professor Wilson has derived, as might easily be supposed, the greatest aid from the qualities for which we have given him credit—and it is in criticism especially, that it becomes very difficult to say which of these qualities has assisted him the most. It is sheer audacity, however, to which, perhaps, after all, he is the most particularly indebted. How little he owes to intellectual preeminence, and how much

to the mere overbearing impetuosity of his opinions, would be a singular subject for speculation. Nevertheless it is true, that this rash spirit of domination would have served, without his rich ideality, but to hurry him into contempt. Be this as it may, in the first requisite of a critic the Scotch Aristarchus is grossly deficient. Of one who instructs we demand, in the first instance, a certain knowledge of the principles which regulate the instruction. Professor Wilson's capability is limited to a keen appreciation of the beautiful, and fastidious sense of the deformed. Why or how either is either, he never dreams of pretending to inquire, because he sees clearly his own inability to comprehend. He is no analyst. He is ignorant of the machinery of his own thoughts and the thoughts of other men. His criticism is emphatically on the surface—superficial. His opinions are mere *dicta*—unsupported *verba magistri*—and are just or unjust at the variable taste of the individual who reads them. He persuades—he bewilders—he overwhelms—at times he even argues—but there has been no period at which he ever *demonstrated* anything beyond his own utter incapacity for demonstration.

CLXXXII.

One of the most singular styles in the world—certainly one of the most loose—is that of the elder D'Israeli. For example, he thus begins his Chapter on Bibliomania: "The preceding article [that on Libraries] is honorable to literature." Here no self-praise is intended. The writer means to say merely that the facts narrated in the preceding article are honorable, etc. Three-fourths of his sentences are constructed in a similar manner.

The blunders evidently arise, however, from the author's pre-occupation with his subject. His thought, or rather matter, outruns his pen, and drives him upon condensation at the expense of luminousness. The manner of D'Israeli has many of the traits of Gibbon—although little of the latter's precision.

CLXXXIII.

Words—printed ones especially—are murderous things. Keats did (or did not) die of a criticism, Cromwell of Titus's pamphlet "Killing no Murder," and Montfleury perished of the "Andromache." The author of the "Parnasse Réformé" makes him thus speak in Hades—"*L'homme donc qui voudrait savoir ce dont je suis mort qu'il ne demande pas s'il fût de fievre ou de podagre ou d'autre chose, mais qu'il entende que ce fut de L'Andromache.*" As for myself, I am fast dying of the "*Sartor Resartus.*"

CLXXXIV.

Captain Hall is one of the most agreeable of writers. We like him for the same reason that we like a good drawing-room conversationist—there is such a pleasure in listening to his elegant nothings. Not that the captain is unable to be profound. He has, on the contrary, some reputation for science. But in his hands even the most trifling personal adventures become interesting from the very piquancy with which they are told.

CLXXXV.

How truthful an air of deep lamentation hangs here* upon every gentle syllable! It pervades all.

* The Maiden Hunting for her Fawn, by Andrew Marvell.

It comes over the sweet melody of the words, over the gentleness and grace which we fancy in the little maiden herself, even over the half-playful, half-petulant air with which she lingers on the beauties and good qualities of her favorite—like the cool shadow of a summer cloud over a bed of lilies and violets, and "all sweet flowers." The whole thing is redolent with poetry of the *very loftiest order*. It is positively crowded with *nature* and with *pathos*. Every line is an idea—conveying either the beauty and playfulness of the fawn, or the artlessness of the maiden, or the love of the maiden, or her admiration, or her grief, or the fragrance, and sweet warmth, and perfect *appropriateness* of the little nest-like bed of lilies and roses, which the fawn devoured as it lay upon them, and could scarcely be distinguished from them by the once happy little damsel who went to seek her pet with an arch and rosy smile upon her face. Consider the great variety of *truth* and delicate thought in the few lines we have quoted—the *wonder* of the maiden at the fleetness of her favorite—the "*little silver feet*"—the fawn challenging his mistress to the race, "with a pretty skipping grace," running on before, and then, with head turned back, awaiting her approach only to fly from it again—can we not distinctly perceive all these things? The exceeding vigor, too, and beauty of the line,

And trod as if on the four winds.

which are vividly apparent when we regard the artless nature of the speaker, and the *four feet* of the favorite—*one for each wind*. Then the garden of "*my own*," so overgrown—entangled—with lilies and roses as to be "a little wilderness"—the fawn loving to be there and there "*only*"—the maiden

seeking it "where it *should* lie," and not being able to distinguish it from the flowers until "itself would rise"—the lying among the lilies "like a bank of lilies"—the loving to "*fill*" itself with roses,

> And its pure virgin limbs to fold
> In whitest sheets of lilies cold,

and these things being its "*chief*" delights—and then the preeminent beauty and naturalness of the concluding lines—whose very outrageous hyperbole and absurdity only render them the more true to nature and to propriety, when we consider the innocence, the artlessness, the enthusiasm, the passionate grief, and more passionate admiration of the bereaved child.

> *Had it lived long it would have been*
> *Lilies without—roses within.*

CLXXXVI.

We are not among those who regard the genius of Petrarch as a subject for enthusiastic admiration. The characteristics of his poetry are not traits of the highest, or even of a high order; and in accounting for his fame, the discriminating critic will look rather to the circumstances which surrounded the man, than to the literary merits of the pertinacious sonnetteer. Grace and tenderness we grant him—but these qualities are surely insufficient to establish his poetical apotheosis.

In other respects he is entitled to high consideration. As a patriot, notwithstanding some accusations which have been rather urged than established, we can only regard him with approval. In his republican principles; in his support of Rienzi at the risk of the displeasure of the Colonna family; in his whole political conduct, in sort, he seems to

have been nobly and disinterestedly zealous for the welfare of his country. But Petrarch is most important when we look upon him as the bridge by which, over the dark gulf of the middle ages, the knowledge of the old world made its passage into the new. His influence on what is termed the revival of letters was, perhaps, greater than that of any man who ever lived; certainly far greater than that of any of his immediate contemporaries. His ardent zeal in recovering and transcribing the lost treasures of antique lore cannot be too highly appreciated. But for him, many of our most valued classics might have been numbered with Pindar's hymns and dithyrambics. He devoted days and nights to this labor of love; snatching numerous precious books from the very brink of oblivion. His judgment in these things was strikingly correct, while his erudition, for the age in which he lived, and for the opportunities he enjoyed, has always been a subject of surprise.

CLXXXVII.

One of the most singular pieces of literary Mosaic is Mr. Longfellow's "Midnight Mass for the Dying Year." The general idea and manner are from Tennyson's "Death of the Old Year," several of the most prominent points are from the death scene of Cordelia in "Lear," and the line about the "hooded friars" is from the "Comus" of Milton. Some approach to this patchwork may be found in these lines from Tasso—

> Giace l'alta Cartago: à pena i segni
> De l'alte sui ruine il lido serba:
> Muoino le città, muoino i regni;
> Copre i fasti e le pompe arena et herba:
> E l'huom d'esser mortal per che si sdegni.

This is entirely made up from Lucan and Sulspicius. The former says of Troy—

Iam tota teguntur
Pergama dumetis: etiam perire ruinæ.

Sulspicius, in a letter to Cicero, says of Megara, Egina and Corinth—"*Hem! nos homunculi indignamur si quis nostrûm interiit, quorum vita brevior esse debet, cum uno loco tot oppidorum cadavera projecta jaceant.*"

CLXXXVIII.

The ordinary pickpocket filches a purse, and the matter is at an end. He neither takes honor to himself, openly, on the score of the purloined purse, nor does he subject the individual robbed to the charge of pickpocketism in his own person; by so much the less odious is he, then, than the filcher of literary property. It is impossible, we should think, to imagine a more sickening spectacle than that of the plagiarist, who walks among mankind with an erecter step, and who feels his heart beat with a prouder impulse, on account of plaudits which he is conscious are the due of another. It is the purity, the nobility, the ethereality of just fame —it is the contrast between this ethereality and the grossness of the crime of theft, which places the sin of plagiarism in so detestable a light. We are horror-stricken to find existing in the same bosom the soul-uplifting thirst for fame, and the debasing propensity to pilfer. It is the anomaly—the discord —which so grossly offends.

CLXXXIX.

Voltaire, in his preface to "Brutus," actually *boasts* of having introduced the Roman Senate on the stage in red mantles.

CXC.

"*Les anges*," says Madame Dudevant, a woman who intersperses many an admirable sentiment amid a chaos of the most shameless and altogether objectionable fiction—"*Les anges ne sont plus pures que le cœur d'un jeune homme qui aime en vérité.*" The angels are not more pure than the heart of a young man who loves with fervor. The hyperbole is scarcely less than true. It would be truth itself, were it averred of the love of him who is at the same time young and a poet. The boyish poet-love is indisputably that one of the human sentiments which most nearly realizes our dreams of the chastened voluptuousness of heaven.

In every allusion made by the author of "Childe Harold" to his passion for Mary Chaworth, there runs a vein of almost spiritual tenderness and purity, strongly in contrast with the gross earthliness pervading and disfiguring his ordinary love-poems. The Dream, in which the incidents of his parting with her when about to travel, are said to be delineated, or at least paralleled, has never been excelled (certainly never excelled by him) in the blended fervor, delicacy, truthfulness and ethereality which sublimate and adorn it. For this reason, it may well be doubted if he has written anything so universally popular. That his attachment for this "Mary" (in whose very name there indeed seemed to exist for him an "enchantment") was earnest, and longabiding, we have every reason to believe. There are a hundred evidences of this fact, scattered not only through his own poems and letters, but in the memoirs of his relatives, and cotemporaries in general. But that it *was* thus earnest and enduring, does not controvert, in any degree, the opinion

that it was a passion (if passion it can properly be termed) of the most thoroughly romantic, shadowy and imaginative character. It was born of the hour, and of the youthful necessity to love, while it was nurtured by the waters and the hills, and the flowers, and the stars. It had no peculiar regard to the person, or to the character, or to the reciprocating affection of Mary Chaworth. Any maiden, not immediately and positively repulsive, he would have loved, under the same circumstances of hourly and unrestricted communion, such as the engravings of the subject shadow forth. They met without restraint and without reserve. As mere children they sported together; in boyhood and girlhood they read from the same books, sang the same songs, or roamed hand in hand, through the grounds of the conjoining estates. The result was not merely natural or merely probable, it was as inevitable as destiny itself.

In view of a passion thus engendered, Miss Chaworth, (who is represented as possessed of no little personal beauty and some accomplishments,) could not have failed to serve sufficiently well as the incarnation of the ideal that haunted the fancy of the poet. It is perhaps better, nevertheless, for the mere romance of the love-passages between the two, that their intercourse was broken up in early life and never uninterruptedly resumed in after years. Whatever of warmth, whatever of soul-passion, whatever of the truer nare and essentiality of romance was elicited during the youthful association is to be attributed altogether to the poet. If *she* felt at all, it was only while the magnetism of *his* actual presence compelled her to feel. If *she* responded at all, it was merely because the necromancy of *his* words of fire could not do other-

wise than exhort a response. In absence, the bard bore easily with him all the fancies which were the basis of his flame—a flame which absence itself but served to keep in vigor—while the less ideal but at the same time the less really substantial affection of his lady-love, perished utterly and forthwith, through simple lack of the element which had fanned it into being. He to her, in brief, was a not unhandsome, and not ignoble, but somewhat portionless, somewhat eccentric and rather lame young man. She to him was the Egeria of his dreams—the Venus Aphrodite that sprang, in full and supernal loveliness, from the bright foam upon the storm-tormented ocean of his thoughts.

CXCI.

Mill says that he has "demonstrated" his propositions. Just in the same way Anaxagoras demonstrated snow to be black, (which, perhaps, it is, if we could see the thing in the proper light,) and just in the same way the French advocate, Linguet, with Hippocrates in his hand, demonstrated bread to be a slow poison. The worst of the matter is, that propositions such as these seldom *stay* demonstrated long enough to be thoroughly understood.

CXCII.

We have read Mr. Paulding's Life of Washington with a degree of interest seldom excited in us by the perusal of any book whatever. We are convinced by a deliberate examination of the design, manner, and rich material of the work, that, as it grows in age, it will grow in the estimation of our countrymen, and, finally, will not fail to take a deeper hold upon the public mind, and upon the

public affections, than any work upon the same subject, or of a similar nature, which has been yet written—or, possibly, which may be written hereafter. Indeed, we cannot perceive the necessity of anything farther upon the great theme of Washington. Mr. Paulding has completely and most beautifully filled the *vacuum* which the works of Marshall and Sparks have left open. He has painted the boy, the man, the husband, and the Christian. He has introduced us to the private affections, aspirations, and charities of that hero whose affections of all affections were the most serene, whose aspirations the most God-like, and whose charities the most gentle and pure. He has taken us abroad with the patriot-farmer in his rambles about his homestead. He has seated us in his study and shown us the warrior-Christian in unobtrusive communion with his God. He has done all this too, and more, in a simple and quiet manner, in a manner peculiarly his own, and which mainly because it is his own, cannot fail to be exceedingly effective. Yet it is very possible that the public may, for many years to come, overlook the rare merits of a work whose want of arrogant assumption is so little in keeping with the usages of the day, and whose striking simplicity and *naiveté* of manner give, to a cursory examination, so little evidence of the labor of composition. We have no fears, however, for the future. Such books as these before us, go down to posterity like rich wines, with a certainty of being more valued as they go. They force themselves with the gradual but rapidly accumulating power of strong wedges into the hearts and understandings of a community.

In regard to the style of Mr. Paulding's Washington, it would scarcely be doing it justice to speak

of it merely as well adapted to its subject and to its immediate design. Perhaps a rigorous examination would detect an occasional want of euphony, and some inaccuracies of syntatical arrangement. But nothing could be more out of place than any such examination in respect to a book whose forcible, rich, vivid, and comprehensive English might advantageously be held up, as a model for the young writers of the land. There is no better literary *manner* than the manner of Mr. Paulding. Certainly no American, and possibly no living writer of England, has more of those numerous peculiarities which go to the formation of a happy style. It is questionable, we think, whether any writer of any country combines as many of these peculiarities with as much of that essential negative virtue, the absence of affectation. We repeat, as our confidc[illegible] opinion, that it would be difficult, even with great care and labor, to improve upon the general manner of the volumes now before us, and that they contain many long individual passages of a force and beauty not to be surpassed by the finest passages of the finest writers in any time or country. It is this striking character in the *Washington* of Mr. Paulding—striking and peculiar indeed at a season when we are so culpably inattentive to all matters of this nature, as to mistake for style the fine airs at second hand of the silliest romancers—it is this character we say, which should insure the fulfilment of the writer's principal design, in the immediate introduction of his book into every respectable academy in the land.

CXCIII.

Scott, in his "Presbyterian Eloquence," speaks of "that ancient fable, not much known," in which

a trial of skill in singing being agreed upon between the cuckoo and the nightingale, the ass was chosen umpire. When each bird had done his best, the umpire declared that the nightingale sang extremely well, but that "for a good plain song give him the cuckoo." The judge with the long ears, in this case, is a fine type of the tribe of critics who insist upon what they call "quietude" as the supreme literary excellence—gentlemen who rail at Tennyson and elevate Addison into apotheosis. By the way, the following passage from Sterne's "Letter from France," should be adopted at once as a motto by the "Down-East Review": "As we rode along the valley, we saw a herd of asses on the top of one of the mountains. How they viewed and *reviewed* us."

CXCIV.

A hundred criticisms to the contrary notwithstanding, I must regard "The Lady of Lyons" as one of the most successful dramatic efforts of modern times. It is popular, and justly so. It could not fail to be popular so long as the people have a heart. It abounds in sentiments which stir the soul as the sound of a trumpet. It proceeds rapidly and consequentially; the interest not for one moment being permitted to flag. Its incidents are admirably conceived and skilfully wrought into execution. Its *dramatis personæ*, throughout, have the high merit of being natural, although, except in the case of Pauline, there is no marked individuality. She is a creation which would have done no dishonor to Shakspeare. She excites profound emotion. It has been sillily objected to her, that she is weak, mercenary, and at points ignoble. She is; and what then? We are not dealing with Clarissa

Harlowe. Bulwer has painted a woman. The chief defect of the play lies in the heroine's consenting to wed Beauseant, while aware of the existence and even the continued love of Claude. As the plot runs, there is a question in Pauline's soul between a comparatively trivial (because merely worldly) injury to her father, and utter ruin and despair inflicted upon her husband. Here there should not have been an instant's hesitation. The audience have no sympathy with any. Nothing on earth should have induced the wife to give up the living Melnotte. Only the assurance of his death could have justified her in sacrificing herself to Beauseant. As it is, we hate her for the sacrifice. The effect is repulsive—but I must be understood as calling this effect objectionable solely on the ground of its being at war with the whole genius of the play.

CXCV.

"Contempt," says an eastern proverb, "pierces even through the shell of the tortoise;" but the skull of a Fuller would feel itself insulted by a comparison, in point of impermeability, with the shell of a Gallipago turtle.

CXCVI.

How thoroughly comprehensive is the account of Adam, as given at the bottom of the old picture in the Vatican!—"*Adam, divinitus edoctus, primus scientiarum et literarum inventor.*" VII

CXCVII.

If need were, I should have little difficulty, perhaps, in defending a certain apparent dog-

matism to which I am prone, on the topic of versification.

"What is Poetry?" notwithstanding Leigh Hunt's rigmarolic attempt at answering it, is a query that, with great care and deliberate agreement beforehand on the exact value of certain leading words, *may*, possibly, be settled to the partial satisfaction of a few analytical intellects, but which, in the existing condition of metaphysics, never *can* be settled to the satisfaction of the majority; for the question is purely metaphysical, and the whole science of metaphysics is at present a chaos, through the impossibility of fixing the meanings of the words which its very nature compels it to employ. But as regards versification, this difficulty is only partial; for although one-third of the topic may be considered metaphysical, and thus may be mooted at the fancy of this individual or of that, still the remaining two-thirds belong, undeniably, to the mathematics. The questions ordinarily discussed with so much gravity in regard to rhythm, metre, etc., are susceptible of positive adjustment by demonstration. Their laws are merely a portion of the Median laws of form and quantity—of relation. In respect, then, to any of these ordinary questions—these sillily moot points which so often arise in common criticism—the prosodist would speak as weakly in saying "this or that proposition is *probably* so and so, or *possibly* so and so," as would the mathematician in admitting that, in his humble opinion, or if he were not greatly mistaken, any two sides of a triangle were, together, greater than the third side. I must add, however, as some palliation of the discussions referred to, and of the objections so often urged with a sneer to "particular theories of versification binding no one but their inventor"—

that there is really extant no such work as a Prosody *Raisonnée*. The Prosodies of the schools are merely collections of vague *laws*, with their more vague exceptions, based upon no principles whatever, but extorted in the most speculative manner from the usages of the ancients, who had *no* laws beyond those of their ears and fingers. "And these were sufficient," it will be said, "since 'The Iliad' is melodious and harmonious beyond anything of modern times." Admit this:—but neither do we write in Greek, nor has the invention of modern times been as yet exhausted. An analysis based on the natural laws of which the bard of Scios was ignorant, would suggest multitudinous improvements to the best passages of even "The Iliad"—nor does it in any manner follow from the supposititious fact that Homer found in his ears and fingers a satisfactory system of rules (the point which I have just denied)—nor does it follow, I say, from this, that the rules which *we* deduce from the Homeric *effects* are to supersede those immutable principles of time, quantity, etc.—the mathematics, in short, of music—which must have stood to these Homeric effects in the relation of *causes*—the *mediate* causes of which these "ears and fingers" are simply the *intermedia*.

CXCVIII.

Of Berryer, somebody says "he is the man in whose description is the greatest possible consumption of antithesis." For "description" read "lectures," and the sentence would apply well to Hudson, the lecturer on Shakspeare. Antithesis is his end—he has no other. He does not employ it to enforce thought, but he gathers thought from all quarters

with the sole view to its capacity for antithetical expression. His essays have thus only paragraphical effect; as wholes, they produce not the slightest impression. No man living could say what it is Mr. Hudson proposes to demonstrate; and if the question were propounded to Mr. H. himself, we can fancy how particularly embarrassed he would be for a reply. In the end, were he to answer honestly, he would say—"*antithesis*."

As for his reading, Julius Cæsar would have said of him that he sang ill, and undoubtedly he must have "gone to the dogs" for his experience in pronouncing the *r* as if his throat were bored like a rifle-barrel.*

CXCIX.

It is James Montgomery who thinks proper to style McPherson's "Ossian" a collection of halting, dancing, lumbering, grating, nondescript paragraphs."

CC.

A book† which puzzles me beyond measure, since, while agreeing with its general conclusions, (except where it discusses *prévision*,) I invariably find fault with the reasoning through which the conclusions are attained. I think the treatise grossly illogical

* "*Nec illi* (*Demontheni*) *turpe videbatur vel, optimis relictis magistris, adcanes se conferre, et ab illis literæ vim et naturam petere, illorumque in sonando, quod satis est, morem imitari.*"—Ad Meker, de vet. Pron. Ling. Græcæ.

† Human Magnetism: Its Claim to Dispassionate Inquiry. Being an Attempt to show the Utility of its Application for the Relief of Human Suffering. By W. Newnham, M. R. S. L. Author of the Reciprocal Influence of Body and Mind. Wiley & Putnam.

throughout. For example:—the origin of the work is thus stated in an introductory chapter:

About twelve months since, I was asked by some friends to write a paper against Mesmerism—and I was furnished with materials by a highly esteemed quondam pupil, which proved incontestably, that under some circumstances the operator might be duped—that hundreds of enlightened persons might equally be deceived—and certainly went far to show that the pretended science was wholly a delusion—a system of fraud and jugglery by which the imaginations of the credulous were held in thraldom through the arts of the designing. Perhaps in an evil hour I assented to the proposition thus made—but on reflection, I found that the facts before me only led to the *direct proof* that certain phenomena might be counterfeited; and the existence of counterfeit coin is rather a proof that there is somewhere the genuine standard gold to be imitated.

The fallacy here lies in a mere variation of what is called "begging the question." Counterfeit coin is said to prove the existence of genuine:—this, of course, is no more than the truism that there can be no counterfeit where there is no genuine—just as there can be no badness where there is no goodness—the terms being purely relative. But *because* there can be no counterfeit where there is no original, does it in any manner follow that any undemonstrated original exists? In seeing a spurious coin we know it to be such by comparison with coins *admitted* to be genuine; but were *no* coin admitted to be genuine, how should we establish the counterfeit, and what right should we have to talk of counterfeits at all? Now, in the case of Mesmerism, our author is merely *begging the admission.* In saying that the existence of counterfeit proves the existence of real Mesmerism, he demands that the real *be admitted.* Either he demands this or there is no

shadow of force in his proposition—for it is clear that we can *pretend to be* that which is not. A man, for instance, may feign himself a sphynx or a griffin, but it would never do to regard as thus demonstrated the actual existence of either griffins or sphynxes. A word alone—the word "counterfeit"—has been sufficient to lead Mr. Newnham astray. People cannot be properly said to "counterfeit" prévision, etc., but to *feign* these phenomena. Dr. Newnham's argument, of course, is by no means original with *him*, although he seems to pride himself on it as if it were. Dr. More says: "That there should be so universal a fame and fear of that which never was, nor is, nor can be ever in the world, is to me the greatest miracle of all. If there had not been, at some time or other, true miracles, it had not been so easy to impose on the people by false. The alchemist would never go about to sophisticate metals, to pass them off for true gold and silver, unless that such a thing was acknowledged as true gold and silver in the world." This is precisely the same idea as that of Dr. Newnham, and belongs to that extensive class of argumentation which is *all point*—deriving its whole effect from epigrammatism. That the belief in ghosts, or in a Deity, or in a future state, or in anything else credible or incredible—that any such belief is universal, demonstrates nothing more than that which needs no demonstration—the human unanimity—the identity of construction in the human brain—an identity of which the inevitable result must be, upon the whole, similar deductions from similar *data*. Most especially do I disagree with the author of this book in his (implied) disparagement of the work of Chauncey Hare Townshend—a work to be valued properly only in a day to come.

CCI.

The day is done, and the darkness
Falls from the wings of night,
As a feather is wafted downward
From an eagle in its flight.*

The *single* feather here is imperfectly illustrative of the omniprevalent darkness; but a more especial objection is the likening of one feather to the falling of another. Night is personified as a bird, and darkness—the feather of this bird—falls from it, how?—as another feather falls from another bird. Why, it does this *of course*. The illustration is identical—that is to say, null. It has no more force than an identical proposition in logic.

CCII.

The question of international copyright has been overloaded with words. The right of property in a literary work is disputed merely for the sake of disputation, and no man should be at the trouble of arguing the point. Those who deny it, have made up their minds to deny everything tending to further the law in contemplation. Nor is the question of expediency in any respect relevant. Expediency is only to be discussed where no *rights* interfere. It would no doubt be very expedient in any poor man to pick the pocket of his wealthy neighbor, (as the poor are the majority, the case is precisely parallel to the copyright case;) but what would the rich think if expediency were permitted to overrule their right? But even the expediency is untenable, grossly so. The immediate advantage arising to the pockets of our people, in the existing condition of things, is no doubt sufficiently plain. We get

* Prŏem to Longfellow's "Waif."

more reading for less money than if the international law existed; but the remoter disadvantages are of infinitely greater weight. In brief, they are these: First, we have injury to our national literature by repressing the efforts of our men of genius; for genius, as a general rule, is poor in worldly goods and cannot write for nothing. Our genius being thus repressed, we are written *at* only by our "gentlemen of elegant leisure," and mere gentlemen of elegant leisure have been noted, time out of mind, for the insipidity of their productions. In general, too, they are obstinately conservative, and this feeling leads them into imitation of foreign, more especially of British models. This is one main source of imitativeness with which, as a people, we have been justly charged, although the first cause is to be found in our position as a colony. Colonies have always naturally aped the mother land. In the second place, irreparable ill is wrought by the almost exclusive dissemination among us of foreign—that is to say, of monarchical or aristocratical sentiment in foreign books; nor is this sentiment less fatal to democracy because it reaches the people themselves directly in the gilded pill of the poem or the novel. We have next to consider the impolicy of our committing, in the national character, an open and continuous wrong on the frivolous pretext of its benefiting ourselves. The last and by far the most important consideration of all, however, is that sense of insult and injury aroused in the whole active intellect of the world, the bitter and fatal resentment excited in the universal heart of literature—a resentment which will not and which cannot make nice distinctions between the temporary perpetrators of the wrong and that democracy in general which permits its perpetration. The autorial body is the

most autocratic on the face of the earth. How, then, can those institutions even hope to be safe which systematically persist in trampling it under foot?

CCIII.

The drama, as the chief of the imitative arts, has a tendency to beget and keep alive in its votaries the imitative propensity. This might be supposed *à priori*, and experience confirms the supposition. Of all imitators, dramatists are the most perverse, the most unconscionable, or the most unconscious, and have been so time out of mind. Euripides and Sophocles were merely echoes of Æschylus, and not only was Terence Menander and nothing beyond, but of the sole Roman tragedies extant, (the ten attributed to Seneca,) nine are on Greek subjects. Here, then, is cause enough for the "decline of the drama," if we are to believe that the drama has declined. But it has not: on the contrary, during the last fifty years it has materially advanced. All other arts, however, have, in the same interval, advanced at a far greater rate—each very nearly in the direct ratio of its non-imitativeness—painting, for example, least of all—and the effect on the drama is, of course, that of apparent retrogradation.

CCIV.

The Swedenborgians inform me that they have discovered all that I said in a magazine article, entitled "Mesmeric Revelation," to be absolutely true, although at first they were very strongly inclined to doubt my veracity—a thing which, in that particular instance, I never dreamed of not doubting myself. The story is a pure fiction from beginning to end.

CCV.

Here is a book of "amusing travels," which is full enough of statistics to have been the joint composition of Messieurs Busching, Hassel, Cannabitch, Gaspari, Gutsmuth and company.

CCVI.

I have never yet seen an English heroic verse on the proper model of the Greek—although there have been innumerable attempts, among which those of Coleridge are, perhaps, the most absurd, next to those of Sir Philip Sidney and Longfellow. The author of "The Vision of Rubeta" has done better, and Percival better yet; but no one has seemed to suspect that the natural preponderance of spondaic words in the Latin and Greek must, in the English, be supplied by art—that is to say, by a careful culling of the few spondaic words which the language affords—as, for example, here:

Man is a | complex, | compound, | compost, | yet is he | God-born.

This, to all intents, is a Greek hexameter, but then its spondees, are spondees, and not mere trochees. The verses of Coleridge and others are dissonant, for the simple reason that there is no equality in time between a trochee and a dactyl. When Sir Philip Sidney writes,

So to the | woods Love | runnes as | well as | rides to the | palace,

he makes an heroic verse only to the eye; for "woods Love" is the only true spondee, "runs as," "well as," and "palace," have each the first syllable long and the second short—that is to say, they are all

trochees, and occupy less time than the dactyls or spondee—hence the halting. Now, all this seems to be the simplest thing in the world, and the only wonder is how men professing to be scholars should attempt to engraft a verse, of which the spondee is an element, upon a stock which repels the spondee as antagonistical.

CCVII.

In the sweet "Lily of Nithsdale," we read—

> She's gane to dwell in heaven, my lassie—
> She's gane to dwell in heaven;—
> Ye're ow're pure, quo' the voice of God,
> For dwelling out o' heaven.

The *ow're* and the *o'* of the two last verses should be Anglicized. The Deity at least, should be supposed to speak so as to be understood—although I am aware that a folio has been written to demonstrate broad Scotch as the language of Adam and Eve in Paradise.

CCVIII.

The conclusion of the Prōem in Mr. Longfellow's late "Waif" is exceedingly beautiful. The whole poem is remarkable in this, that one of its principal excellences arises from what is generically, a demerit. No error, for example, is more certainly fatal in poetry than defective *rhythm;* but here the *slipshodiness* is so thoroughly in unsion with the nonchalant air of the thoughts—which again, are so capitally applicable to the thing done (a mere introduction of other people's fancies)—that the effect of the looseness of rhythm becomes palpable, and we see at once that here is a case in which to be

correct would be inartistic. Here are three of the quatrains—

> I see the lights of the village
> Gleam through the rain and the mist,
> And a feeling of sadness comes over me
> That my soul cannot resist—
>
> A feeling of sadness and longing
> That is not akin to pain,
> And *resembles sorrow only*
> *As the mists resemble the rain. . . .*
>
> And the night shall be filled with music
> And the cares that infest the day
> Shall fold their tents like the Arabs,
> *And as silently steal away.*

Now these lines are not to be scanned. They are referable to no true principles of rhythm. The general idea is that of a succession of anapæsts; yet not only is this idea confounded with that of dactyls, but this succession is improperly interrupted at all points—improperly, because by unequivalent feet. The partial prosaicism thus brought about, however, (without any interference with the mere melody,) becomes a beauty solely through the nicety of its adaptation to the *tone* of the poem, and of this tone, again, to the matter in hand. In his keen sense of this adaptation, (which conveys the notion of what is vaguely termed "ease,") the reader so far loses sight of the rhythmical imperfection that he can be convinced of its existence only by treating in the same rhythm (or, rather, lack of rhythm) a subject of different tone—a subject in which decision shall take the place of nonchalance. Now, undoubtedly, I intend all this as complimentary to Mr. Longfellow; but it was for the utterance of these very opinions in the "New York Mirror" that I

was accused, by some of the poet's friends, of inditing what they think proper to call "strictures," on the author of "Outre-Mer."

CCIX.

We might contrive a very poetical and very suggestive, although, perhaps, no very tenable philosophy, by supposing that the virtuous live while the wicked suffer annihilation, hereafter; and that the danger of the annihilation (which danger would be in the ratio of the sin) might be indicated nightly by slumber, and occasionally, with more distinctness, by a swoon. In proportion to the dreamlessness of the sleep, for example, would be the degree of the soul's liability to annihilation. In the same way, to swoon and awake in utter unconsciouness of any lapse of time during the syncope, would demonstrate the soul to have been then in such condition that, had death occurred, annihilation would have followed. On the other hand, when the revival is attended with remembrance of visions, (as is now and then the case, in fact,) then the soul to be considered in such condition as would insure its existence after the bodily death—the bliss or wretchedness of the existence to be indicated by the character of the visions.

CCX.

When we attend less to "authority" and more to principles, when we look *less* at merit and *more* at demerit, (instead of the converse, as some persons suggest,) we shall then be better critics than we are. We must neglect our models and study our capabilities. The mad eulogies on what occasionally has, in letters, been well done, spring from our im-

perfect comprehension of what it is possible for us to do better. "A man who has never seen the sun," says Calderon, "cannot be blamed for thinking that no glory can exceed that of the moon; a man who has seen neither moon nor sun, cannot be blamed for expatiating on the incomparable effulgence of the morning star." Now, it is the business of the critic so to soar that he shall *see the sun*, even although its orb be far below the ordinary horizon.

CCXI.

The United State's motto, *E pluribus unum*, may possibly have a sly allusion to Pythagoras' definition of beauty—the reduction of many into one.

CCXII.

The great feature of the "Curiosity Shop" is its chaste, vigorous, and glorious *imagination*. This is the one charm, all potent, which alone would suffice to compensate for a world more of error than Mr. Dickens ever committed. It is not only seen in the conception, and general handling of the story, or in the invention of character; but it pervades every sentence of the book. We recognise its prodigious influence in every inspired word. It is this which induces the reader who is at all ideal, to pause frequently, to re-read the occasionally quaint phrases, to muse in uncontrollable delight over thoughts which, while he wonders he has never hit upon them before, he yet admits that he never has encountered. In fact it is the wand of the enchanter.

Had we room to particularize, we would mention as points evincing most distinctly the ideality of the "Curiosity Shop"—the picture of the shop itself—the newly-born desire of the worldly old man for

the peace of green fields—his whole character and conduct, in short—the schoolmaster, with his desolate fortunes, seeking affection in little children—the haunts of Quilp among the wharf-rats—the tinkering of the Punch-men among the tombs—the glorious scene where the man of the forge sits poring, at deep midnight, into that dread fire—again the whole conception of this character; and, last and greatest, the stealthy approach of Nell to her death—her gradual sinking away on the journey to the village, so skilfully indicated rather than described—her pensive and prescient meditation—the fit of strange musing which came over her when the house *in which she was to die* first broke upon her sight—the description of this house, of the old church, and of the church-yard—everything in rigid consonance with the one impression to be conveyed—that deep meaningless well—the comments of the Sexton upon death, and upon his own secure life—this whole world of mournful yet peaceful idea merging, at length, into the decease of the child Nelly, and the uncomprehending despair of the grandfather. These concluding scenes are so drawn that human language, urged by human thought, could go no farther in the excitement of human feelings. And the pathos is of that best order which is relieved, in great measure, by ideality. Here the book has never been equalled,—never approached except in one instance, and that is in the case of the "Undine" of De La Motte Fouqué. The imagination is parhaps as great in this latter work, but the pathos, although truly beautiful and deep, fails of much of its effect through the material from which it is wrought. The chief character, being endowed with purely fanciful attributes, cannot command our full sympathies, as can a simple denizen of earth. In saying, a page

or so above, that the death of the child left too painful an impression, and should therefore have been avoided, we must, of course, be understood as referring to the work as a whole, and in respect to its general appreciation and popularity. The death, as recorded, is, we repeat, of the highest order of literary excellence—yet while none can deny this fact, there are few who will be willing to read the concluding passages a second time.

Upon the whole we think the "Curiosity Shop" very much the best of the works of Mr. Dickens. It is scarcely possible to speak of it too well. It is in all respects a tale which will secure for its author the enthusiastic admiration of every man of genius.

CCXIII.

It is not every one who can put "a good thing" properly together, although, perhaps, when thus properly put together, every tenth person you meet with may be capable of both conceiving and appreciating it. We cannot bring ourselves to believe that less actual ability is required in the composition of a really good "brief article," than in a fashionable novel of the usual dimensions. The novel certainly requires what is denominated a sustained effort—but this is a matter of mere perseverance, and has but a collateral relation to talent. On the other hand—unity of effect, a quality not easily appreciated or indeed comprehended by an ordinary mind, and a *desideratum* difficult of attainment, even by those who can conceive it—is indispensable in the "brief article," and not so in the common novel. The latter, if admired at all, is admired for its detached passages, without reference to the work as a whole —or without reference to any general design—which

if it even exist in some measure, will be found to have occupied but little of the writer's attention, and cannot, from the length of the narrative, be taken in at one view, by the reader.

CCXIV.

I am not sure that Tennyson is not the greatest of poets. The uncertainty attending the public conception of the term "poet" alone prevents me from demonstrating that he *is*. Other bards produce effects which are, now and then, otherwise produced than by what we call poems; but Tennyson an effect which only a poem does. His alone are idiosyncratic poems. By the enjoyment or non-enjoyment of the "Morte D'Arthur," or of the "Ænone," I would test any one's ideal sense. There are passages in his works which rivet a conviction I had long entertained, that the *indefinite* is an element in the true ποιησις. Why do some persons fatigue themselves in attempts to unravel such fantasy-pieces as the "Lady of Shalott?" As well unweave the "*ventum textilem.*" If the author did not deliberately propose himself a suggestive indefinitiveness of meaning, with the view of bringing about a definitiveness of vague and therefore of spiritual *effect*—this, at least, arose from the silent analytical promptings of that poetic genius which, in its supreme development, embodies all orders of intellectual capacity. I *know* that indefinitiveness is an element of the true music—I mean of the true musical expression. Give to it any undue decision—imbue it with any very determinate tone—and you deprive it, at once, of its ethereal, its ideal, its intrinsic and essential character. You dispel its luxury of dream. You dissolve the atmosphere of the mystic

upon which it floats. You exhaust it of its breath of fäery. It now becomes a tangible and easily appreciable idea—a thing of the earth, earthy. It has not, indeed, lost its power to please, but all which I consider the distinctiveness of that power. And to the uncultivated talent, or to the unimaginative apprehension, this deprivation of its most delicate nare will be, not unfrequently, a recommendation. A determinateness of expression is sought—and often by composers who should know better—is sought as a beauty rather than rejected as a blemish. Thus we have, even from high authorities, attempts at absolute *imitation* in music. Who can forget the silliness of the "Battle of Prague?" What man of taste but must laugh at the interminable drums, trumpets, blunderbusses, and thunder? "*Vocal* music," says L'Abbate Gravina, who would have said the same thing of instrumental, "ought to imitate the natural language of the human feelings and passions, rather than the warbling of Canary birds, which our singers, now-a-days, affect so vastly to mimic with their quaverings and boasted cadences." This is true only so far as the "rather" is concerned. If any music must imitate anything, it were assuredly better to limit the imitation as Gravina suggests. Tennyson's shorter pieces abound in minute rhythmical lapses sufficient to assure me that—in common with all poets living or dead—he has neglected to make precise investigation of the principles of metre; but, on the other hand, so perfect is his rhythmical instinct in general, that, like the present Viscount Canterbury, he seems *to see with his ear.*

CCXV.

There are some facts in the physical world which have a really wonderful analogy with others in the

world of thought, and seem thus to give some color of truth to the (false) rhetorical dogma, that metaphor or simile may be made to strengthen an argument, as well as to embellish a description. The principle of the *vis inertiæ*, for example, with the amount of *momentum* proportionate with it and consequent upon it, seems to be identical in physics and metaphysics. It is not more true, in the former, that a large body is with more difficulty set in motion than a smaller one, and that its subsequent impetus is commensurate with this difficulty, than it is, in the latter, that intellects of the vaster capacity, while more forcible, more constant, and more extensive in their movements than those of inferior grade, are yet the less readily moved, and are more embarrassed and more full of hesitation in the first few steps of their progress.

CCXVI.

Thomas Moore—the most skilful literary artist of his day—perhaps of any day—a man who stands in the singular and really wonderful predicament of being undervalued on account of the profusion with which he has scattered about him his good things. The brilliancy on any one page of Lalla Rookh would have sufficed to establish that very reputation which has been in a great measure self-dimmed by the galaxied lustre of the entire book. It seems that the horrid laws of political economy cannot be evaded even by the inspired, and that a perfect versification, a vigorous style, and a never-tiring fancy, may, like the water we drink and die without, yet despise, be so plentifully set forth as to be absolutely of no value at all.

CCXVII.

This is a queer little book,* which its author regards as "not only necessary, but urgently called for," because not only "the mass of the people are ignorant of English Grammar, but because those who profess great knowledge of it, and even those who make the teaching of it their business, will be found, upon examination, to be very far from understanding its principles."

Whether Mr. P. proceeds upon the safe old plan of *Probo meliora, deteriora sequor*—whether he is one of "the mass," and means to include himself among the ignoramuses—or whether he is only a desperate quiz—we shall not take it upon ourselves to say; but the fact is clear that, in a Preface of less than two small duodecimo pages (the leading object of which seems to be an eulogy upon one William Cobbett,) he has given us some half dozen distinct instances of bad grammar.

"For these purposes," says he—that is to say—the purposes of instructing mankind and enlightening "every American youth" without exception—"for these purposes, I have written my lessons in a series of letters. A mode that affords more opportunity for plainness, familiarity, instruction, and entertainment, than any other. A mode that was adopted by Chesterfield, in his celebrated instructions on politeness. A mode that was adopted by Smollett, in many of his novels, which, even at this day, hold a distinguished place in the world of fiction. A mode that was adopted by William Cobbett, not only in his admirable treatise on English Grammar, but in nearly every work that he wrote." "To Mr.

* A Grammar of the English Language, in a series of Letters, addressed to every American Youth. By Hugh A. Pue. Philadelphia: Published by the Author.

Cobbett," adds the instructor of every American youth—to "Mr. Cobbett I acknowledge myself *indebted* for the greater part of the grammatical knowledge which I possess." Of the fact stated there can be no question. Nobody but Cobbett could have been the grammatical Mentor of Mr. Pue, whose book (which is *all* Cobbett) speaks plainly upon the point—nothing but the ghost of William Cobbett, looking over the shoulder of Hugh A. Pue, could have inspired the latter gentleman with the bright idea of stringing together four consecutive sentences, in each of which the leading nominative noun is destitute of a verb.

Mr. Pue may attempt to justify his phraseology here, by saying that the several sentences, quoted above, commencing with the words, "A mode," are merely continuations of the one beginning "For these purposes;" but this is no justification at all. By the use of the period, he has rendered each sentence distinct, and each must be examined as such, in respect to its grammar. We are only taking the liberty of condemning Mr. P. by the words of his own mouth. Turning to page 72, where he treats of punctuation, we read as follows:—"The full point is used at the end of every complete sentence; and a complete sentence is a collection of words making a complete sense, without being dependent upon another collection of words to convey the full meaning intended." Now, what kind of a meaning can we give to such a sentence as "A mode that was adopted by Chesterfield in his celebrated instructions on politeness," if we are to have "no dependence upon" the sentences that precede it? But, even in the supposition that these five sentences have been run into one, as they should have been, they would still be ungrammatical. For example—"For these purposes

I have written my lessons in a series of letters—a mode that affords more opportunity for plainness, familiarity, instruction, and entertainment than any other—a mode, etc." This would have been the proper method of punctuation. "A mode" is placed in apposition with "a series of letters." But it is evident that it is *not* the "series of letters" which is the "mode." It is *the writing the lessons* in a series which is so. Yet, in order that the noun "mode" can be properly placed in apposition with what precedes it, this latter must be either a noun, or a sentence, which, taken collectively, can serve as one. Thus, in any shape, all that we have quoted is bad grammar.

We say "*bad grammar*," and say it through sheer obstinacy, because Mr. Pue says we should not. "Why, what is grammar?" asks he indignantly. "Nearly all grammarians tell us that grammar is the writing and speaking of the English language correctly. What then is bad grammar? Why bad grammar must be the bad writing and speaking of the English language correctly!!" We give the two admiration notes and all.

In the first place, if grammar be only the writing and speaking the *English* language correctly, then the French, or the Dutch, or the Kickapoos are miserable, ungrammatical races of people, and have no hopes of being anything else, unless Mr. Pue proceeds to their assistance:—but let us say nothing of this for the present. What we wish to assert is, that the usual definition of grammar, as "the writing and speaking *correctly*," is an error which should have been long ago exploded. Grammar is the analysis of language, and this analysis will be *good* or *bad*, just as the capacity employed upon it be weak or strong—just as the grammarian

be a Horne Tooke or a Hugh A. Pue. But perhaps, after all, we are treating this gentleman discourteously. His book may be merely intended as a good joke. By the by, he says in his preface, that "while he informs the student, he shall take particular care to *entertain* him." Now, the truth is, we have been exceedingly entertained. In such passages as the following, however, which we find upon the second page of the Introduction, we are really at a loss to determine whether it is the *utile* or the *dulce* which prevails. We give the italics of Mr. Pue; without which, indeed, the singular force and beauty of the paragraph cannot be duly appreciated.

"The *proper* study of English grammar, so far from being *dry*, is one of the most rational enjoyments known to us; one that is highly calculated to rouse the dormant energies of the student; it requiring continual mental effort; unceasing exercise of mind. It is, in fact, the *spreading of a thought-producing plaster of Paris upon the extensive grounds of intellect!* It is the parent of idea, and great causation of reflection; the mighty *instigator of insurrection in the interior;* and, above all, the unflinching *champion of internal improvement!*" We know nothing about plaster of Paris; but the analogy which subsists between ipecac and grammar—at least between ipecac and the grammar of Mr. Pue—never, certainly, struck us in so clear a point of view, as it does now.

But, after all. whether Mr. P.'s queer little book shall or shall not meet the views of "Every American Youth," will depend pretty much upon another question of high moment—whether "Every American Youth" be or be not as great a nincompoop as Mr. Pue.

CCXVIII.

That Lord Brougham *was* an extraordinary man no one in his sense will deny. An intellect of unusual capacity, goaded into diseased action by passions nearly ferocious, enabled him to astonish the world, and especially the "hero-worshippers," as the author of Sartor-Resartus has it, by the combined extent and variety of his mental triumphs. Attempting many things, it may at least be said that he egregiously failed in none. But that he pre-eminently excelled in any cannot be affirmed with truth, and might well be denied *à priori*. We have no faith in admirable Crichtons, and this merely because we *have* implicit faith in Nature and her laws. "He that is borne to be a man," says Wieland, in his Peregrinus Proteus, "neither should nor can be anything nobler, greater, nor better than a man." The Broughams of the human intellect are never its Newtons or its Bayles. Yet the contemporaneous reputation to be acquired by the former is naturally greater than any which the latter may attain. The versatility of one whom we see and hear is a more dazzling and more readily appreciable merit than his profundity; which latter is best estimated in the silence of the closet, and after the quiet lapse of years. What impression Lord Brougham has stamped upon his age, cannot be accurately determined until Time has fixed and rendered definite the lines of the medal; and fifty years hence it will be difficult, perhaps to make out the deepest indentation of the *exergue*. Like Coleridge he should be regarded as one who might have done much, had he been satisfied with attempting but little.

CCXIX.

The Art of Mr. Dickens, although elaborate and great, seems only a happy modification of Nature. In this respect he differs remarkably from the author of "Night and Morning." The latter, by excessive care and by patient reflection, aided by much rhetorical knowledge, and general information, has arrived at the capability of producing books which might be mistaken by ninety-nine readers out of a hundred, for the genuine inspirations of genius. The former, by the promptings of the truest genius itself, has been brought to compose, and evidently without effort, works which have effected a long-sought consummation—which have rendered him the idol of the people, while defying and enchanting the critics. Mr. Bulwer, through art, has almost created a genius. Mr. Dickens, through genius, has perfected a standard from which art itself will derive its essence in rules.

CCXX.

While Defoe would have been fairly entitled to immortality had he never written Robinson Crusoe, yet his many other very excellent writings have nearly faded from our attention, in the superior lustre of the Adventures of the Mariner of York. What better possible species of reputation could the author have desired for that book than the species which it has so long enjoyed? It has become a household thing in nearly every family in Christendom. Yet never was admiration of any work—universal admiration—more indiscriminately or more inappropriately bestowed. Not one person in ten—nay, not one person in five hundred, has, during the perusal of Robinson Crusoe, the most remote con-

ception that any particle of genius, or even of common talent, has been employed in its creation! Men do not look upon it in the light of a literary performance. Defoe has none of their thoughts—Robinson all. The powers which have wrought the wonder have been thrown into obscurity by the very stupendousness of the wonder they have wrought! We read, and become perfect abstractions in the intensity of our interest—we close the book, and are quite satisfied that we could have written as well ourselves. All this is effected by the potent magic of verisimilitude. Indeed the author of Crusoe must have possessed, above all other faculties, what has been termed the faculty of *identification*—that dominion exercised by volition over imagination which enables the mind to lose its own, in a fictitious, individuality. This includes, in a very great degree, the power of abstraction; and with these keys we may partially unlock the mystery of that spell which has so long invested the volume before us. But a complete analysis of our interest in it cannot be thus afforded. Defoe is largely indebted to his subject. The idea of man in a state of perfect isolation, although often entertained, was never before so comprehensively carried out. Indeed the frequency of its occurrence to the thoughts of mankind argued the extent of its influence on their sympathies, while the fact of no attempt having been made to give an embodied form to the conception, went to prove the difficulty of the undertaking. But the true narrative of Selkirk in 1711, with the powerful impression it then made upon the public mind, sufficed to inspire Defoe with both the necessary courage for his work, and entire confidence in its success. How wonderful has been the result!

CCXXI.

The increase, within a few years, of the magazine literature, is by no means to be regarded as indicating what some critics would suppose it to indicate—a downward tendency in American taste or in American letters. It is but a sign of the times—an indication of an era in which men are forced upon the curt, the condensed, the well-digested—in place of the voluminous—in a word, upon journalism in lieu of dissertation. We need now the light artillery rather than the Peace-makers of the intellect. I will not be sure that men at present think more profoundly than half a century ago, but beyond question they think with more rapidity, with more skill, with more tact, with more of method and less of excrescence in the thought. Besides all this, they have a vast increase in the thinking material. they have more facts, more to think about. For this reason, they are disposed to put the greatest amount of thought in the smallest compass and disperse it with the utmost attainable rapidity. Hence the journalism of the age; hence, in especial, magazines. Too many we cannot have, as a general proposition; but we demand that they have sufficient merit to render them noticeable in the beginning, and that they continue in existence sufficiently long to permit us a fair estimation of their value.

CCXXII.

One half the pleasure experienced at a theatre arises from the spectator's sympathy with the rest of the audience, and, especially, from his belief in their sympathy with him. The eccentric gentleman who not long ago, at the Park, found himself the solitary occupant of box, pit, and gallery, would

have derived but little enjoyment from his visit, had he been suffered to remain. It was an act of mercy to turn him out. The present absurd rage for lecturing is founded in the feeling in question. Essays which we would not be hired to read—so trite is their subject—so feeble is their execution—so much easier is it to get better information on similar themes out of any encyclopædia in Christendom—we are brought to tolerate, and alas, even to applaud in their tenth and twentieth repetition, through the sole force of our sympathy with the throng. In the same way we listen to a story with greater zest when there are others present at its narration beside ourselves. Aware of this, authors without due reflection have repeatedly attempted, by supposing a circle of listeners, to imbue their narratives with the interest of sympathy. At a cursory glance the idea seems plausible enough. But, in the one case, there is an actual, personal, and palpable sympathy, conveyed in looks, gestures and brief comments—a sympathy of real individuals, all with the matters discussed to be sure, but then especially, *each with each*. In the other instance, we, alone in our closet, are required to sympathise *with* the sympathy of fictitious listeners, who, so far from being present in body, are often studiously kept out of sight and out of mind for two or three hundred pages at a time. This is sympathy double-diluted—the shadow of a shade. It is unnecessary to say that the design invariably fails of its effect.

CCXXIII.

The qualities of Heber are well understood. His poetry is of a high order. He is imaginative, glowing, and vigorous, with a skill in the management

of his means unsurpassed by that of any writer of his time, but without any high degree of originality. Can there be anything in the nature of a "classical" life at war with novelty *per se?* At all events, few fine scholars, such as Heber truly was, *are* original.

CCXXIV.

Original characters, so called, can only be critically praised as such, either when presenting qualities known in real life, but never before depicted, (a combination nearly impossible) or when presenting qualities (moral, or physical, or both) which, although unknown, or even known to be hypothetical, are so skilfully adapted to the circumstances which surround them, that our sense of fitness is not offended, and we find ourselves seeking a reason why those things *might not have been*, which we are still satisfied *are not*. The latter species of originality appertains to the loftier regions of the *Ideal*.

CCXXV.

George Balcombe, we are induced to regard, upon the whole, as *the best* American novel. There have been few books of its peculiar kind, we think, written in *any* country, much its superior. Its interest is intense from beginning to end. Talent of a lofty order is evinced in every page of it. Its most distinguishing features are invention, vigor, almost audacity, of thought—great variety of what the German critics term *intrigue*, and exceeding ingenuity and finish in the adaptation of its component parts. Nothing is wanting to a complete whole, and nothing is out of place, or out of time. Without being chargeable in the least degree with imitation, the novel bears a strong family resemblance to the Caleb

Williams of Godwin. Thinking thus highly of George Balcombe, we still do not wish to be understood as ranking it with the more brilliant fictions of some of the living novelists of Great Britain. In regard to the authorship of the book, some little conversation has occurred, and the matter is still considered a secret. But why so?—or rather, *how so?* The mind of the chief personage of the story, is the transcript of a mind familiar to us—an unintentional transcript, let us grant—but still one not to be mistaken. George Balcombe thinks, speaks, and acts, as no person, we are convinced, but Judge Beverly Tucker, ever precisely thought, spoke, or acted before.

FIFTY SUGGESTIONS

I.

IT is observable that, while among all nations the omni-color, white, has been received as an emblem of the Pure, the no-color, black, has by no means been generally admitted as *sufficiently* typical of impurity. There are blue devils as well as black; and when we think *very* ill of a woman, and wish to *blacken* her character, we merely call her "a *blue*-stocking," and advise her to read, in Rabelais' "*Gargantua*," the chapter "*de ce qui est signifié par les couleurs blanc et bleu.*" There is far more difference between these "*couleurs*," in fact, than that which exists between simple *black* and white. Your "blue," when we come to talk of stockings, is black in *issimo*—"*nigrum nigrious nigro*"—like the matter from which Raymond Lully first manufactured his alcohol.

II.

Mr. ——, I perceive, has been appointed Librarian to the new——Athenæum. To him, the appointment is advantageous in many respects. Especially:—"*Mon cousin, voici une belle occasion pour apprende à lire!*"

III.

As far as I can understand the "loving our enemies," it implies the hating our friends.

IV.

In commencing our dinners with gravy soup, no doubt we have taken a hint from Horace—

———Da, he says, si *grave* non est,
Quæ prima iratum ventrem placaverit isca.

V.

Of much of our cottage architecture we may safely say, I think, (admitting the good intention,) that it *would* have been Gothic if it had not felt it its duty to be Dutch.

VI.

James's multitudinous novels seem to be written upon the plan of "the songs of the Bard of Schiraz" in which, we are assured by Fadladeen, "the same beautiful thought occurs again and again in every possible variety of phrase."

VII.

Some of our foreign lions resemble the human brain in one very striking particular. They are without any sense themselves, and yet are the centres of sensation.

VIII.

Mirabeau, I fancy, acquired his wonderful tact at foreseeing and meeting *contingencies*, during his residence in the stronghold of *If*.

IX.

Cottle's "Reminiscences of Coleridge" is just such a book as damns its perpetrator forever in the opinion of every gentleman who reads it. More and

more every day do we moderns *povoneggiarsi* about our Christianity; yet, so far as the *spirit* of Christianity is concerned, we are immeasurably behind the ancients. Mottoes and proverbs are the indices of national character; and the Anglo-Saxons are disgraced in having no proverbial equivalent to the "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*" Moreover—where, in all statutary Christendom, shall we find a *law* so Christian as the "*Defuncti injuriâ ne afficiantur*" of the Twelve Tables? The simple *negative* injunction of the Latin Law and proverb—the injunction *not to do ill* to the dead—seems, at a first glance, scarcely susceptible of improvement in the delicate respect of its terms. I cannot help thinking, however, that the sentiment, if not the idea intended, is more forcibly conveyed in an apothegm by one of the old English moralists, James Puckle. By an ingenious figure of speech he contrives to imbue the negation of the Roman command with a spirit of active and positive beneficence. "When speaking of the dead," he says, in his "Gray Cap for a Green Head," "*so fold up your discourse that their virtues may be outwardly shown, while their vices are wrapped up in silence.*"

X.

I have no doubt that the Fourierites honestly fancy "a nasty poet fit for nothing" to be the true translation of "*poeta nascitur non fit.*"

XI.

There surely can*not* be "more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamt of" (oh, Andrew Jackson Davis!) "in *your* philosophy."

XII.

"It is only as the Bird of Paradise quits us in taking wing," observes, or should observe, some poet, "that we obtain a full view of the beauty of its plumage;" and it is only as the politician is about being "turned out" that—like the snake of the Irish Chronicle when touched by St. Patrick—he "awakens to a sense of his *situation*."

XIII.

Newspaper editors seem to have constitutions closely similar to those of the Deities in "Walhalla," who cut each other to pieces every day, and yet get up perfectly sound and fresh every morning.

XIV.

As far as I can comprehend the modern cant in favor of "unadulterated Saxon," it is fast leading us to the language of that region where, as Addison has it, "they sell the best fish and speak the plainest English."

XV.

The frightfully long money-pouches—"like the Cucumber called the Gigantic"—which have come in vogue among our belles—are *not* of Parisian origin, as many suppose, but are strictly indigenous here. The fact is, such a fashion would be quite out of place in Paris, where it is money *only* that women keep in a purse. The purse of an American lady, however, must be large enough to carry both her money and the soul of its owner.

XVI.

I can see no objection to gentlemen "standing for Congress"—provided they stand on one side—nor to

their "running for Congress"—if they are in a very great hurry to get there—but it would be a blessing if some of them could be persuaded into sitting still, for Congress, after they arrive.

XVII.

If *Envy*, as Cyprian has it, be "the moth of the soul," whether shall we regard *Content* as its Scotch snuff or its camphor?

XVIII.

M——, having been "used up" in the "—— Review," goes about town lauding his critic—as an epicure lauds the best London mustard—with the tears in his eyes.

XIX.

"*Con tal que las costumbres de un autor sean puras y castas*," says the Catholic Don Tomas de las Torres, in the preface to his "Amatory Poems," "*importo muy poco qui no sean igualmente severas sus obras;*" meaning, in plain English, that, provided the personal morals of an author are pure, it matters little what those of his books are.

For so unprincipled an idea, Don Tomas, no doubt, is still having a hard time of it in Purgatory; and, by way of most pointedly manifesting their disgust at his philosophy on the topic in question, many modern theologians and divines are now busily squaring their conduct by his proposition exactly *conversed*.

XX.

Children are never too tender to be whipped:—like tough beef-steaks, the more you beat them the more tender they become.

XXI.

Lucian, in describing the statue "with its surface of Parian marble and its interior filled with rags," must have been looking with a prophetic eye at some of our great "moneyed institutions."

XXII.

That poets (using the word comprehensively, as including artists in general) are a *genus irritabile*, is well understood; but the *why*, seems not to be commonly seen. An artist *is* an artist only by dint of his exquisite sense of Beauty—a sense affording him rapturous enjoyment, but at the same time implying, or involving, an equally exquisite sense of Deformity of disproportion. Thus a wrong—an injustice—done a poet who is really a poet' excites him to a degree which, to ordinary apprehension, appears disproportionate with the wrong. Poets *see* injustice—*never* where it does not exist—but very often where the unpoetical see no injustice whatever. Thus the poetical irritability has no reference to "temper" in the vulgar sense, but merely to a more than usual clear-sightedness in respect to wrong:—this clear-sightedness being nothing more than a corollary from the vivid perception of right—of justice—of proportion—in a word, of το καλον. But one thing is clear—that the man who is *not* "irritable," (to the ordinary apprehension,) is *no poet.*

XXIII.

Let a man succeed ever so evidently—ever so demonstrably—in many different displays of *genius*, the envy of criticism will agree with the popular voice in denying him more than *talent* in any. Thus a poet who has achieved a great (by which I mean an

effective) poem, should be cautious not to distinguish himself in any other walk of Letters. In especial—let him make no effort in Science—unless anonymously, or with the view of waiting patiently the judgment of posterity. Because universal or even versatile geniuses have rarely or never been known, *therefore*, thinks the world, none such can ever be. A "therefore" of this kind is, with the world, conclusive. But what is the *fact*, as taught us by analysis of mental power? Simply, that the *highest* genius—that the genius which all men instantaneously acknowledge as such—which acts upon individuals, as well as upon the mass, by a species of magnetism incomprehensible but irresistible and *never resisted*—that this genius which demonstrates itself in the simplest gesture—or even by the absence of all—this genius which speaks without a voice and flashes from the unopened eye—is but the result of generally large mental power existing in a state of *absolute proportion*—so that no one faculty has undue predominance. *That* factitious "genius"—that "genius" in the popular sense—which is but the manifestation of the abnormal predominance of some one faculty over all the others—and, of course, at the expense and to the detriment, of all the others—is a result of mental disease or rather, of organic malformation of mind:—it is this and nothing more. Not only will such "genius" fail, if turned aside from the path indicated by its predominant faculty; but, even when pursuing this path—when producing those works in which, certainly, it is *best* calculated to succeed—will give unmistakable indications of *unsoundness*, in respect to general intellect. Hence, indeed, arises the just idea that

"Great wit to madness nearly is allied."

I say "*just* idea;" for by "great wit," in this case, the poet intends precisely the pseudo-genius to which I refer. The true genius, on the other hand, is necessarily, if not universal in its manifestations, at least capable of universality; and if, attempting all things, it succeeds in one rather better than in another, this is merely on account of a certain bias by which *Taste* leads it with more earnestness in the one direction than in the other. With equal zeal, it would succeed equally in all.

To sum up our results in respect to this very simple but much *vexata questio*:—

What the world calls "genius" is the state of mental disease arising from the undue predominance of some one of the faculties. The works of such genius are never sound in themselves, and, in especial, always betray the general mental insanity.

The *proportion* of the mental faculties, in a case where the general mental power is *not* inordinate, gives that result which we distinguish as *talent*:—and the latent is greater or less, first, as the general mental power is greater or less; and, secondly, as the proportion of the faculties is more or less absolute.

The proportion of the faculties, in a case where the mental power is inordinately great, gives that result which *is* the true *genius* (but which, on account of the proportion and seeming simplicity of its works, is seldom acknowledged to *be* so;) and the genius is greater or less, first, as the general mental power is more or less inordinately great; and, secondly, as the proportion of the faculties is more or less absolute.

An objection will be made:—that the greatest excess of mental power, however proportionate, does not seem to satisfy our idea of genius, unless we have, in addition, sensibility, passion, energy.

The reply is, that the "absolute proportion" spoken of, when applied to inordinate mental power, gives, as a result, the appreciation of Beauty and horror of Deformity which we call sensibility, together with that intense vitality, which is implied when we speak of "Energy" or "Passion."

XXIV.

"And Beauty draws us by a single hair."—Capillary attraction, of course.

XXV.

It is by no means clear, as regards the present revolutionary spirit of Europe, that it is a spirit which "moveth altogether if it move at all." In Great Britain it may be kept quiet for half a century yet, by placing at the head of affairs an experienced medical man. He should keep his forefinger constantly on the pulse of the patient, and exhibit *panem* in gentle doses, with as much *circenses* as the stomach can be made to retain.

XXVI.

The taste manifested by our Transcendental poets, *is* to be treated "reverentially," beyond doubt, as one of Mr. Emerson's friends suggests—for the fact is, it is Taste, on her death-bed—Taste kicking *in articulo mortis*.

XXVII.

I should not say, of Taglioni, exactly that she dances, but that she laughs with her arms and legs, and that if she takes vengeance on her present oppressors, she will be amply justified by the *lex Talionis*.

XXVIII.

The world is infested, just now, by a new sect of philosophers, who have not yet suspected themselves of forming a sect, and who, consequently, have adopted no name. They are the *Believers in everything Old.* Their High Priest in the East, is Charles Fourier—in the West, Horace Greely; and high priests they are to some purpose. The only common bond among the sect, is Credulity:—let us call it Insanity at once, and be done with it. Ask any one of them *why* he believes this or that, and, if he be conscientious, (ignorant people usually are,) he will make you very much such a reply as Talleyrand made when asked why he believed in the Bible. "I believe in it first," said he, "because I am Bishop of Autun; and, secondly, *because I know nothing about it at all.*" What these philosophers call "argument," is a way they have "*de nier ce qui est et d'expliquer ce qui n'est pas.*"*

XXIX.

K——, the publisher, trying to be critical, talks about books pretty much as a washerwoman would about Niagara falls or a poulterer about a phœnix.

XXX.

The ingenuity of critical malice would often be laughable but for the disgust which, even in the most perverted spirits, injustice never fails to excite. A common trick is that of decrying, impliedly, the higher, by insisting upon the lower, merits of an author. Macaulay, for example, deeply feeling how much critical acumen is enforced by cautious attention to the mere "rhetoric" which is its vehicle, has

* Nouvelle Héloise.

at length become the best of modern rhetoricians. His brother reviewers—anonymous, of course, and likely to remain so forever—extol "the acumen of Carlyle, the analysis of Schlegel, *and* the style of Macaulay." Bancroft is a philosophical historian; but no amount of philosophy has yet taught him to despise a minute accuracy in point of fact. His *brother* historians talk of "the grace of Prescott, the erudition of Gibbon, *and* the painstaking precision of Bancroft." Tennyson, perceiving how vividly an imaginative effect is aided, now and then, by a certain quaintness judiciously introduced, brings this latter, at times, in support of his most glorious and most delicate imagination:—whereupon his *brother* poets hasten to laud the imagination of Mr. Somebody, whom nobody imagined to have any, "*and* the somewhat affected quaintness of Tennyson. —Let the noblest poet add to his other excellences—if he dares—that of faultless versification and scrupulous attention to grammar. He is damned at once. His rivals have it in their power to discourse of "A. the true poet, *and* B. the versifier and disciple of Lindley Murray."

XXXI.

The goddess Laverna, who is a head without a body, could not do better, perhaps, than make advances to "La Jeune France," which, for some years to come, at least, must otherwise remain a body without a head.

XXXII.

H—— calls his verse a "poem" very much as Francis the First bestowed the title, *mes déserts*, upon his snug little deer-park at Fontainebleau.

XXXIII.

Mr. A—— is frequently spoken of as "one of our most industrious writers;" and, in fact, when we consider how much he has written, we perceive, at once, that he *must* have been industrious, or he could never (like an honest woman as he is) have so thoroughly succeeded in keeping himself from being "talked about."

XXXIV.

That a cause leads to an effect, is scarcely more certain than that, so far as Morals are concerned, a repetition of effect tends to the generation of cause. Herein lies the principle of what we so vaguely term "Habit."

XXXV.

With the exception of Tennyson's "Locksley Hall," I have never read a poem combining so much of the fiercest passion with so much of the most delicate imagination, as the "Lady Geraldine's Courtship" of Miss Barrett. I am forced to admit, however, that the latter work *is* a palpable imitation of the former, which it surpasses in thesis, as much as it falls below it in a certain calm energy, lustrous and indomitable—such as we might imagine in a broad river of molten gold.

XXXVI.

What has become of the inferior planet which Decuppis, about nine years ago, declared he saw traversing the disc of the sun?

XXXVII.

"Ignorance *is* bliss"—but, that the bliss be real the ignorance must be so profound as not to suspect itself ignorant. With this understanding, Boileau's line may be read thus:

Le plus fou *toujours* est le plus satisfait,"
"*toujours*" in place of "*souvent.*"

XXXVIII.

Bryant and Street are both, essentially, descriptive poets; and descriptive poetry, even in its happiest manifestation, is *not* of the highest order. But the distinction between Bryant and Street is very broad. While the former, in reproducing the sensible images of Nature, reproduces the sentiments with which he regards them, the latter gives us the images and nothing beyond. He never forces us to feel what we feel he must have felt.

XXXIX.

In lauding Beauty, Genius merely evinces a filial affection. To Genius Beauty gives life—reaping often a reward in Immortality.

XL.

And this is the "American Drama" of — Well!—that "Conscience which makes cowards of us all" will permit me to say, in praise of the performance, only that it is not quite so bad as I expected it to be. But then I always expect too much.

XLI.

What we feel to be *Fancy* will be found fanciful still, whatever be the theme which engages it. No *subject* exalts it into Imagination. When Moore is

termed "a fanciful poet," the epithet is applied with precision. He *is*. He is fanciful in "Lalla Rookh," and had he written the "Inferno," in the "Inferno" he would have contrived to be still fanciful and nothing beyond.

XLII.

When we speak of "a suspicious man," we may mean either one who suspects, or one to be suspected. Our language needs either the adjective "suspectful," or the adjective "suspectable."

XLIII.

"To love," says Spencer, "is

> To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
> To speed, to give, to want, to be undone.

The philosophy, here, might be rendered more profound, by the mere omission of a comma. We all know the *willing* blindness—the *voluntary* madness of Love. We express this in thus punctuating the last line:

> To speed, to give—*to want to be undone.*

It is a case, in short, where we gain a point by omitting it.

XLIV.

Miss Edgeworth seems to have had only an approximate comprehension of "Fashion," for she says: "If it was the fashion to burn me, and I at the stake, I hardly know ten persons of my acquaintance who would refuse to throw on a fagot." There are *many* who, in such a case, would "refuse to throw on a fagot"—for fear of smothering out the fire.

XLV.

I am beginning to think with Horsely—that "the People have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them."

XLVI.

"It is not fair to review my book without reading it," says Mr. Mathews, talking at the critics, and, as usual, expecting impossibilities. The man who is clever enough to *write* such a work, is clever enough to read it, no doubt; but we should not look for so much talent in the world at large. Mr. Mathews will not imagine that I mean to blame *him*. The book alone is in fault, after all. The fact is that, "*er lasst sich nicht lesen*"—it will not *permit* itself to be read. Being a hobby of Mr. Mathew's, and brimful of spirit, it will let nobody mount it but Mr. Mathews.

XLVII.

It is only to teach his children Geography, that G—— wears a boot the picture of Italy upon the map.

XLVIII.

In his great Dictionary, Webster seems to have had an idea of being more English than the English—"*plus Arabe qu'en Arabie.*"*

XLIX.

That there were once "seven wise men" is by no means, strictly speaking, an historical *fact;* and I am rather inclined to rank the idea among the Kabbala.

* Count Anthony Hamilton.

L.

Painting their faces to look like Macaulay, some of our critics manage to resemble him, at length, as a Massaccian does a Ræffäellian Virgin; and, except that the former is feebler and thinner than the other—suggesting the idea of its being the ghost of the other—not one connoisseur in ten can perceive any difference. But then, unhappily, even the street lazzaroni can feel the distinction.

OLD ENGLISH POETRY*

IT should not be doubted that at least one-third of the affection with which we regard the older poets of Great Britain should be attributed to what is, in itself, a thing apart from poetry—we mean to the simple love of the antique—and that, again, a third of even the proper *poetic sentiment* inspired by their writings should be ascribed to a fact which, while it has strict connection with poetry in the abstract, and with the old British poems themselves, should not be looked upon as a merit appertaining to the authors of the poems. Almost every devout admirer of the old bards, if demanded his opinion of their productions, would mention vaguely, yet with perfect sincerity, a sense of dreamy, wild, indefinite, and he would perhaps say, indefinable delight; on being required to point out the source of this so shadowy pleasure, he would be apt to speak of the quaint in phraseology and in general handling. This quaintness is, in fact, a very powerful adjunct to ideality, but in the case in question it arises independently of the author's will, and is altogether apart from his intention. Words and their rhythm have varied. Verses which affect us to-day with a vivid delight, and which delight, in many instances, may be traced to the one source, quaintness, must have worn in the days of their construction, a very commonplace air. This is, of course, no argument against the poems *now*—we mean it only as against the poets *then*. There is a growing desire to over-

*The Book of Gems. Edited by S. C. Hall.

rate them. The old English muse was frank, guileless, sincere, and although very learned, still learned without art. No general error evinces a more thorough confusion of ideas than the error of supposing Donne and Cowley metaphysical in the sense wherein Wordsworth and Coleridge are so. With the two former ethics were the end—with the two latter the means. The poet of the "Creation" wished, by highly artificial verse, to inculcate what he supposed to be moral truth—the poet of the "Ancient Mariner" to infuse the Poetic Sentiment through channels suggested by analysis. The one finished by complete failure what he commenced in the grossest misconception; the other, by a path which could not possibly lead him astray, arrived at a triumph which is not the less glorious because hidden from the profane eyes of the multitude. But in this view even the "metaphysical verse" of Cowley is but evidence of the simplicity and single-heartedness of the man. And he was in this but a type of his *school*—for we may as well designate in this way the entire class of writers whose poems are bound up in the volume before us, and throughout all of whom there runs a very perceptible general character. They used little art in composition. Their writings sprang immediately from the soul—and partook intensely of that soul's nature. Nor is it difficult to perceive the tendency of this *abandon*—to elevate immeasurably all the energies of mind—but, again, so to mingle the greatest possible fire, force, delicacy, and all good things, with the lowest possible bathos, baldness, and imbecility, as to render it not a matter of doubt that the average results of mind in such a school will be found inferior to those results in one (*ceteris paribus*) more artificial.

We cannot bring ourselves to believe that the

selections of the "Book of Gems" are such as will impart to a poetical reader the clearest possible idea of the beauty of the *school*—but if the intention had been merely to show the school's character, the attempt might have been considered successful in the highest degree. There are long passages now before us of the most despicable trash, with no merit whatever beyond that of their antiquity. The criticisms of the editor do not particularly please us. His enthusiasm is too general and too vivid not to be false. His opinion, for example, of Sir Henry Wotton's "Verses on the Queen of Bohemia"—that there are few finer things in our language," is untenable and absurd.

In such lines we can perceive not one of those higher attributes of Poesy which belong to her in all circumstances and throughout all time. Here everything is art, nakedly, or but awkwardly concealed. No prepossession for the mere antique (and in this case we can imagine no other prepossession) should induce us to dignify with the sacred name of poetry a series, such as this, of elaborate and threadbare compliments, stitched, apparently, together, without fancy, without plausibility, and without even an attempt at adaptation.

In common with all the world, we have been much delighted with "The Shepherd's Hunting" by Withers—a poem partaking, in a remarkable degree, of the peculiarities of *Il Penseroso*. Speaking of Poesy, the author says:—

> "By the murmur of a spring,
> Or the least boughs rustling,
> By a daisy whose leaves spread
> Shut when Titan goes to bed,
> Or a shady bush or tree,
> She could more infuse in me

Than all Nature's beauties can
In some other wiser man.
By her help I also now
Make this churlish place allow
Something that may sweeten gladness
In the very gall of sadness—
The dull loneness, the black shade,
That these hanging vaults have made,
The strange music of the waves
Beating on these hollow caves,
This ·'ack den which rocks emboss,
Over, own with eldest moss,
The rude portals that give light
More to terror than delight,
This my chamber of neglect
Walled about with disrespect,
From all these and this dull air
A fit object for despair,
She hath taught me by her might
To draw comfort and delight."

But these lines, however good, do not bear with them much of the general character of the English antique. Something more of this will be found in Corbet's "Rewards and Fairies!" We copy a portion of Marvell's "Maiden lamenting for her Fawn"—which we prefer, not only as a specimen of the elder poets, but in itself as a beautiful poem, abounding in pathos, exquisitely delicate imagination and truthfulness, to anything of its species:—

"It is a wondrous thing how fleet
'Twas on those little silver feet,
With what a pretty skipping grace
It oft would challenge me the race,
And when 't had left me far away
'Twould stay, and run again, and stay
For it was nimbler much than hinds.
And trod as if on the four winds
I have a garden of my own,
But so with roses overgrown,

And lilies, that you would it guess
To be a little wilderness;
And all the spring-time of the year
It only loved to be there.
Among the beds of lilies I
Have sought it oft, where it should lie,
Yet could not, till itself would rise
Find it, although before mine eyes.
For in the flaxen lilies shade
It like a bank of lilies laid;
Upon the roses it would feed
Until its lips even seemed to bleed,
And then to me 'twould boldly trip,
And print those roses on my lip;
But all its chief delight was still
With roses thus itself to fill,
And its pure virgin limbs to fold
In whitest sheets of lilies cold.
Had it lived long it would have bee
Lilies without, roses within."

How truthful an air of lamentation hangs here upon every syllable! It pervades all. It comes over the sweet melody of the words—over the gentleness and grace which we fancy in the little maiden herself—even over the half-playful, half-petulant air with which she lingers on the beauties and good qualities of her favourite—like the cool shadow of a summer cloud over a bed of lilies and violets, "and all sweet flowers." The whole is redolent of poetry of a very lofty order. Every line is an idea conveying either the beauty and playfulness of the fawn, or the artlessness of the maiden, or her love, or her admiration, or her grief, or the fragrance and warmth and *appropriateness* of the little nest-like bed of lilies and roses which the fawn devoured as it lay upon them, and could scarcely be distinguished from them by the once happy little damsel who went to seek her pet with an arch and rosy smile on her face. Consider the great variety

of truthful and delicate thought in the few lines we have quoted—the *wonder* of the little maiden at the fleetness of her favourite—the "little silver feet"—the fawn challenging his mistress to a race with "a pretty skipping grace," running on before, and then, with head turned back, awaiting her approach only to fly from it again—can we not distinctly perceive all these things. How exceedingly vigorous, too, is the line,

> "And trod as if on the four winds!"

a vigour apparent only when we keep in mind the artless character of the speaker and the four feet of the favourite, one for each wind. Then consider the garden of "my own," so overgrown, entangled with roses and lilies, as to be "a little wilderness"—the fawn loving to be there, and there "only"—the maiden seeking it "where it *should* lie"—and not being able to distinguish it from the flowers until "itself would rise"—the lying among the lilies "like a bank of lilies"—the loving to "fill itself with roses,"

> "And its pure virgin limbs to fold
> In whitest sheets of lilies cold,"

and these things being its "chief" delights—and then the pre-eminent beauty and naturalness of the concluding lines, whose very hyperbole only renders them more true to nature when we consider the innocence, the artlessness, the enthusiasm, the passionate grief, and more passionate admiration, of the bereaved child—

> "Had it lived long it would have been
> Lilies without—roses within."

CRYPTOGRAPHY

AS we can scarcely imagine a time when there did not exist a necessity, or at least a desire, of transmitting information from one individual to another in such manner as to elude general comprehension, so we may well suppose the practice of writing in cipher to be of great antiquity, De la Guilletiere, therefore, who, in his "Lacedæmon Ancient and Modern," maintains that the Spartans were the inventors of Cryptography, is obviously in error. He speaks of the *scytala* as being the origin of the art; but he should only have cited it as one of its earliest instances, so far as our records extend. The *scytalæ* were two wooden cylinders, precisely similar in all respects. The general of an army, in going upon any expedition, received from the *ephori* one of these cylinders, while the other remained in their possession. If either party had occasion to communicate with the other, a narrow strip of parchment was so wrapped around the *scytala* that the edges of the skin fitted accurately each to each. The writing was then inscribed longitudinally, and the epistle unrolled and despatched. If, by mischance, the messenger was intercepted, the letter proved unintelligible to his captors. If he reached his destination safely, however, the party addressed had only to involve the second cylinder in the strip to decipher the inscription. The transmission to our own times of this obvious mode of cryptography is due, probably, to the *historical* uses of the *scytala* rather than to

anything else. Similar means of secret intercommunication must have existed almost contemporaneously with the invention of letters.

It may be as well to remark, in passing, that in none of the treatises on the subject of this paper which have fallen under our cognisance have we observed any suggestion of a method—other than those which apply alike to all ciphers—for the solution of the cipher by *scytala*. We read of instances, indeed, in which the intercepted parchments were deciphered; but we are not informed that this was ever done except accidentally. Yet a solution might be obtained with absolute certainty in this manner. The strip of skin being intercepted, let there be prepared a cone of great length comparatively—say six feet long—and whose circumference at base shall at least equal the length of the strip. Let this latter be rolled upon the cone near the base, edge to edge, as above described; then, still keeping edge to edge, and maintaining the parchment close upon the cone, let it be gradually slipped towards the apex. In this process, some of those words, syllables, or letters, whose connection is intended, will be sure to come together at that point of the cone where its diameter equals that of the *scytala* upon which the cipher was written. And as in passing up the cone to its apex, all possible diameters are passed over, there is no chance of a failure. The circumference of the *scytala* being thus ascertained, a similar one can be made, and the cipher applied to it.

Few persons can be made to believe that it is not quite an easy thing to invent a method of secret writing which shall baffle investigation. Yet it may be roundly asserted that human ingenuity cannot concoct a cipher which human ingenuity

cannot resolve. In the facility with which such writing is deciphered, however, there exist very remarkable differences in different intellects. Often, in the case of two individuals of acknowledged equality as regards ordinary mental efforts, it will be found that, while one cannot unriddle the commonest cipher, the other will scarcely be puzzled by the most abstruse. It may be observed generally that in such investigations the analytic ability is very forcibly called into action; and, for this reason, cryptographical solutions might with great propriety be introduced into academies as the means of giving tone to the most important of the powers of mind.

Were two individuals, totally unpractised in cryptography, desirous of holding by letter a correspondence which should be unintelligible to all but themselves, it is most probable that they would at once think of a peculiar alphabet, to which each should have a key. At first it would, perhaps, be arranged that *a* should stand for *z*, *b* for *y*, *c* for *x*, *d* for *w*, etc., etc.; that is to say, the order of the letters would be reversed. Upon second thoughts, this arrangement appearing too obvious, a more complex mode would be adopted. The first thirteen letters might be written beneath the last thirteen, thus:

n o p q r s t u v w x y z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m;

and, so placed, *a* might stand for *n* and *n* for *a*, *o* for *b* and *b* for *o*, etc., etc. This, again, having an air of regularity which might be fathomed, the key alphabet might be constructed absolutely at random.

Thus,

a might stand for p
b " " x
c " " u
d " " o, etc.

The correspondents, unless convinced of their error by the solution of their cipher, would no doubt be willing to rest in this latter arrangement as affording full security. But if not, they would be likely to hit upon the plan of arbitrary marks used in place of the usual characters. For example,

(	might be employed	for a
.	"	" b
:	"	" c
;	"	" d
)	"	" e, etc.

A letter composed of such characters would have an intricate appearance unquestionably. If still, however, it did not give full satisfaction, the idea of a perpetually shifting alphabet might be conceived, and thus effected. Let two circular pieces of pasteboard be prepared, one about half-an-inch in diameter less than the other. Let the centre of the smaller be placed upon the centre of the larger, and secured for a moment from slipping; while *radii* are drawn from the common centre to the circumference of the smaller circle, and thus extended to the circumference of the greater. Let there be twenty-six of these *radii*, forming on each pasteboard twenty-six spaces. In each of these spaces on the under circle write one of the letters of the alphabet, so that the whole alphabet be written—if at random so much the better. Do the same with the upper circle. Now run a pin through the common centre, and let the upper circle revolve, while the under one is held fast. Now stop the revolution of the upper circle, and, while both lie still, write the epistle required; using for *a* that letter in the smaller circle which tallies with *a* in the larger, for *b* that letter in the smaller circle which tallies with *b* in the larger,

etc., etc. In order that an epistle thus written may be read by the person for whom it is intended, it is only necessary that he should have in his possession circles constructed as those just described, and that he should know any two of the characters (one in the under and one in the upper circle) which were in juxtaposition when his correspondent wrote the cipher. Upon this latter point he is informed by looking at the two initial letters of the document which serve as a key. Thus, if he sees *a m* at the beginning, he concludes that, by turning his circles so as to put these characters in conjunction, he will arrive at the alphabet employed.

At a cursory glance, these various modes of constructing a cipher seem to have about them an air of inscrutable secrecy. It appears almost an impossibility to unriddle what has been put together by so complex a method. And to some persons the difficulty might be great; but to others—to those skilled in deciphering—such enigmas are very simple indeed. The reader should bear in mind that the basis of the whole art of solution, as far as regards these matters, is found in the general principles of the formation of language itself, and thus is altogether independent of the particular laws which govern any cipher, or the construction of its key. The difficulty of reading a cryptographical puzzle is by no means always in accordance with the labour or ingenuity with which it has been constructed. The sole use of the key, indeed, is for those *au fait* to the cipher; in its perusal by a third party, no reference is had to it at all. The lock of the secret is picked. In the different methods of cryptography specified above, it will be observed that there is a gradually increasing complexity. But this complexity is only in shadow. It has no substance

whatever. It appertains merely to the formation, and has no bearing upon the solution of the cipher. The last mode mentioned is not in the least degree more difficult to be deciphered than the first—whatever may be the difficulty of either.

In the discussion of an analogous subject, in one of the weekly papers of this city, about eighteen months ago, the writer of this article had occasion to speak of the application of a rigorous *method* in all forms of thought—of its advantages—of the extension of its use even to what is considered the operation of pure fancy—and thus, subsequently of the solution of cipher. He even ventured to assert that no cipher, of the character above specified, could be sent to the address of the paper, which he would not be able to resolve. This challenge excited, most unexpectedly, a very lively interest among the numerous readers of the journal. Letters were poured in upon the editor from all parts of the country; and many of the writers of these epistles were so convinced of the impenetrability of their mysteries as to be at great pains to draw him into wagers on the subject. At the same time, they were not always scrupulous about sticking to the point. The cryptographs were, in numerous instances, altogether beyond the limits defined in the beginning. Foreign languages were employed. Words and sentences were run together without interval. Several alphabets were used in the same cipher. One gentleman, but moderately endowed with conscientiousness, inditing us a puzzle composed of pot-hooks and hangers to which the wildest typography of the office could afford nothing similar, went even so far as to jumble together no less than *seven distinct alphabets*, without intervals between the letters, *or between the lines*. Many of the

cryptographs were dated in Philadelphia, and several of those which urged the subject of a bet were written by gentlemen of this city. Out of, perhaps, one hundred ciphers altogether received, there was only one which we did not immediately succeed in resolving. This one we *demonstrated* to be an imposition—that is to say, we fully proved it a jargon of random characters, having no meaning whatever. In respect to the epistle of the seven alphabets, we had the pleasure of completely *non-plussing* its inditer by a prompt and satisfactory translation.

The weekly paper mentioned was, for a period of some months, greatly occupied with the hieroglyphic and cabalistic-looking solutions of the cryptographs sent us from all quarters. Yet with the exception of the writers of the ciphers, we do not believe that any individuals could have been found among the readers of the journal who regarded the matter in any other light than in that of a desperate humbug. We mean to say that no one really believed in the authenticity of the answers. One party averred that the mysterious figures were only inserted to give a *queer* air to the paper, for the purpose of attracting attention. Another thought it more probable that we not only solved the ciphers, but put them together ourselves for solution. This having been the state of affairs at the period when it was thought expedient to decline further dealings in necromancy, the writer of this article avails himself of the present opportunity to maintain the truth of the journal in question—to repel the charges of rigmarole by which it was assailed—and to declare in his own name, that the ciphers were all written in good faith, and solved in the same spirit.

A very common and somewhat too obvious mode

of secret correspondence is the following. A card is interspersed, at irregular intervals with oblong spaces, about the length of ordinary words of three syllables in a bourgeois type. Another card is made exactly coinciding. One is in possession of each party. When a letter is to be written, the key-card is placed upon the paper and words conveying the true meaning inscribed in the spaces. The card is then removed and the banks filled up, so as to make out a signification different from the real one. When the person addressed receives the cipher, he has merely to apply to it his own card, when the superfluous words are concealed, and the significant ones alone appear. The chief objection to this cryptograph is the difficulty of so filling the blanks as not to give a forced appearance to the sentences. Differences also in the handwriting between the words written in the spaces, and those inscribed upon removal of the card, will always be detected by a close observer.

A pack of cards is sometimes made the vehicle of a cipher in this manner. The parties determine, in the first place, upon certain arrangements of the pack. For example; it is agreed that, when a writing is to be commenced, a natural sequence of the spots shall be made; with spades at top, hearts next, diamonds next, and clubs last. This order being obtained, the writer proceeds to inscribe upon the top card the first letter of his epistle, upon the next the second, upon the next the third, and so on until the pack is exhausted, when, of course, he will have written fifty-two letters. He now shuffles the pack according to a preconcerted plan. For example: he takes three cards from the bottom and places them at top, then one from top, placing it at bottom, and so on, for a given number of times. This done, he

again inscribes fifty-two characters as before, proceeding thus until his epistle is written. The pack being received by the correspondent, he has only to place the cards in the order agreed upon for commencement, to read, letter by letter, the first fifty-two characters as intended. He has then only to shuffle in the manner prearranged for the second perusal, to decipher the series of the next fifty-two letters—and so on to the end. The objection to this cryptograph lies in the nature of the missive. *A pack of cards*, sent from one party to another would scarcely fail to excite suspicion, and it cannot be doubted that it is far better to secure ciphers from being considered as such than to waste time in attempts at rendering them scrutiny-proof when intercepted. Experience shows that the most cunningly constructed cryptograph, if suspected, can and will be unriddled.

An unusually secure mode of secret intercommunication might be thus devised. Let the parties each furnish themselves with a copy of the same edition of a book—the rarer the edition the better—as also the rarer the book. In the cryptograph, numbers are used altogether, and these numbers refer to the locality of letters in the volume. For example—a cipher is received commencing, 121-6-8. The party adressed refers to page 121, and looks at the sixth letter from the left of the page in the eighth line from the top. Whatever letter he there finds is the initial letter of the epistle—and so on. This method is very secure; yet it is *possible* to decipher any cryptograph written by its means—and it is greatly objectionable otherwise, on account of the time necessarily required for its solution, even with the key-volume.

It is not to be supposed that Cryptography, as a

serious thing, as the means of imparting important information, has gone out of use at the present day. It is still commonly practised in diplomacy; and there are individuals, even now, holding office in the eye of various foreign governments, whose real business is that of deciphering. We have already said that a peculiar mental action is called into play in the solution of cryptographical problems, at least in those of the higher order. Good cryptographists are rare indeed; and thus their services, although seldom required, are necessarily well requited.

An instance of the modern employment of writing in cipher is mentioned in a work lately published by Messieurs Lea and Blanchard of this city*—"Sketches of Conspicuous Living Characters of France." In a notice of Berryer, it is said that a letter being addressed by the Duchess de Berri to the Legitimists of Paris, to inform them of her arrival, it was accompanied by a long note in cipher, the key of which she had forgotten to give. "The penetrating mind of Berryer," says the biographer, "soon discovered it. It was this phrase substituted for the twenty-four letters of the alphabet—*Le gouvernement provisoire.*"

The assertion that Berryer "soon discovered the key-phrase," merely proves that the writer of these memoirs is entirely innocent of cryptographical knowledge. Monsieur B. no doubt ascertained the key-phrase; but it was merely to satisfy his curiosity, *after the riddle had been read.* He made no use of the key in deciphering. The lock was picked.

In our notice of the book in question (published in the April number of this magazine)† we alluded to this subject thus—

*Philadelphia—*Ed.*
† Graham's—*Ed.*

"The phrase '*Le gouvernement provisoire*' is French, and the note in cipher was addressed to Frenchmen. The difficulty of deciphering may well be supposed much greater, had the key been in a foreign tongue; yet any one who will take the trouble may address us a note, in the same manner as here proposed, and the key-phrase may be either in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Latin, or Greek, (or in any of the dialects of these languages), and we pledge ourselves for the solution of the riddle."

This challenge has elicited but a single response, which is embraced in the following letter. The only quarrel we have with the epistle, is that its writer has declined giving us his name in full. We beg that he will take an early opportunity of doing this, and thus relieve us of the chance of that suspicion which was attached to the cryptography of the weekly journal above mentioned—the suspicion of inditing ciphers to ourselves. The postmark of the letter is *Stonington, Conn.*

S———, Ct., April 21, 1841.

To the Editor of Graham's Magazine.

Sir—In the April number of your magazine, while reviewing the translation by Mr. Walsh of "Sketches of Conspicuous Living Characters of France," you invite your readers to address you a note in cipher, "the key-phrase to which may be either in French, Italian, Spanish, German, Latin or Greek," and pledge yourself for its solution. My attention being called, by your remarks, to this species of cipher-writing, I composed for my own amusement the following exercises, in the first part of which the key-phrase is in English—in the second in Latin. As I did not see (by the number for May) that any of your correspondents had availed himself of your offer, I take the liberty to send the enclosed, on which, if you should think it worth your while, you can exercise your ingenuity.

I am, yours respectfully,

S. D. L.

No. 1.

Cauhiif aud ftd sdftirf ithot tacd wdde rdchfdr tiu fuaefshffheo fdoudf hetiusafhie tuis ied herhchriai fi aeiftdu wn sdaef it iuhfheo hiidohwid fi aen deodsf ths tiu itis hf iaf iuhoheaiin rdff hedr; aer ftd auf it ftif fdoudfin oissiehoafheo hefdiihodeod taf wdde odeduaiin fdusdr ounsfiouastn. Saen fsdohdf it fdoudf iuhfheo idud weiie fi ftd aeohdeff; fisdfhsdf a fiacdf tdar iaf ftacdr aer ftd ouiie iuhffde isie ihft fisd herdihwid oiiiiuheo tiihr, atfdu ithot ftd tahu wdheo sdushffdr fi ouii aoahe, hetiusafhie oiiir wd fuaefshffdr ihft ihffid raeodu ftaf rhfoicdun iiiir defid iefhi ftd aswiiafiun dshffid fatdin udaotdr hff rdffheafhie. Ounsfiouastn tiidcdu siud suisduin dswuaodf ftifd sirdf it iuhfheo ithot aud uderdudr idohwid iein wn sdaef it fisd desiaeafiun wdn ithot sawdf weiie ftd udai fhoehthoafhie it ftd ohstduf dssiindr fi hff siffdffiu.

No. 2.

Ofoiioiiaso ortsiii sov eodisoioe afduiostifoi ft iftvi si tri oistoiv oiniafetsorit ifeov rsri afotiiiiv ridiiot irio rivvio eovit atrotfetsoria aioriti iitri tf oitovin tri aetifei ioreitit sov usttoi oioittstifo dfti afdooitior trso ifeov tri dfit otftfeov softriedi ft oistoiv oriofiforiti suitteii viireiiitifoi ft tri iarfoisiti iiti trir uet otiiiotiv uitfti rid io tri eoviieeiiiv rfasueostr ft rii dftrit tfoeei.

In the solution of the first of these ciphers we had little more than ordinary trouble. The second proved to be exceedingly difficult, and it was only by cailing every faculty into play that we could read it at all. The first runs thus:

"Various are the methods which have been devised ror transmitting secret information from one in-

dividual to another by means of writing, illegible to any except him for whom it was originally destined; and the art of thus secretly communicating intelligence has been generally termed *cryptography*. Many species of secret writing were known to the ancients. Sometimes a slave's head was shaved and the crown written upon with some indelible colouring fluid; after which the hair being permitted to grow again, information could be transmitted with little danger that discovery would ensue until the ambulatory epistle safely reached its destination. Cryptography, however pure, properly embraces those modes of writing which are rendered legible only by means of some explanatory key which makes known the real signification of the ciphers employed to its possessor."

The key-phrase of this cryptograph is—"A word to the wise is sufficient."

The second is thus translated—

"Nonsensical phrases and unmeaning combinations of words, as the learned lexicographer would have confessed himself, when hidden under cryptographic ciphers, serve to *perpdex* the curious enquirer, and baffle penetration more completely than would the most profound *apothegms* of learned philosophers. Abstruse disquisitions of the scholiasts were they but presented before him in the undisguised vocabulary of his mother tongue"——

The last sentence here (as will be seen) is broken off short. The spelling we have strictly adhered to. *D*, by mistake, has been put for *l* in *perplex*.

The key-phrase is—"*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.*"

In the ordinary cryptograph, as will be seen in reference to most of those we have specified above, the artificial alphabet agreed upon by the corre-

spondents is employed, letter for letter in place of the usual or natural one. For example—two parties wish to communicate secretly. It is arranged before parting that

)	shall	stand	for a
(	"	"	b
—	"	"	c
*	"	"	d
:	"	"	e
;	"	"	f
:	"	"	g
:	"	"	h
?	"	"	i or j
!	"	"	k
&	"	"	l
o	"	"	m
‘	"	"	n
†	"	"	o
‡	"	"	p
¶	"	"	q
☛	"	"	r
]	"	"	s
[	"	"	t
£	"	"	u or v
$	"	"	w
¿	"	"	x
¡	"	"	y
☜	"	"	z

Now the following note is to be communicated—

"We must see you immediately upon a matter of great importance. Plots have been discovered, and the conspirators are in our hands. Hasten!"

These words would be written thus—

$.o£][]..!†£?oo.*?)[.&!£‡†‘)o)[[.☛†’;☛.)[?o‡†☛[)‘—.‡&†[]:)£.(..‘*.]—†£.☛.*)‘*[:.—†‘]‡?☛)[†☛])☛.?‘†£☛:)‘*]:)][.‘

This certainly has an intricate appearance, and would prove a most difficult cipher to any one not

conversant with cryptography. But it will be observed that *a*, for example, is never represented by any other character than), *b* never by any other character than (, and so on. Thus by the discovery, accidental or otherwise, of any one letter, the party intercepting the epistle would gain a permanent and decided advantage, and could apply his knowledge to all the instances in which the character in question was employed throughout the cipher.

In the cryptographs, on the other hand, which have been sent us by our correspondent at Stonington, and which are identical in conformation with the cipher resolved by Berryer, no such permanent advantage is to be obtained.

Let us refer to the second of these puzzles. Its key-phrase runs thus.—

Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.

Let us now place the alphabet beneath this phrase, letter beneath letter—

S	u	a	v	i	t	e	r	i	n	m	o	d	o	f	o	r	t	i	t	e	r	i	n	r	e
A	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z

We here see that

a	stands for	c
d	"	m
e	"	g, u, and z
f	"	o
i	"	e, i, s and w
m	"	k
n	"	j and x
o	"	l, n, and p
r	"	h, q, v, and y
s	"	a
t	"	f, r, and t
u	"	b
v	"	d

In this manner *n* stands for two letters, and *e*, *o*, and *t* for three each, while *i* and *r* represent each as many as four. Thirteen characters are made to perform the operations of the whole alphabet. The result of such a key-phrase upon the cipher is to give it the appearance of a mere medley of the letters *e*, *o*, *t*, *r*, and *i*, the latter character greatly predominating through the accident of being employed for letters, which, themselves, are inordinately prevalent in most languages—we mean *e* and *i*.

A letter thus written being intercepted, and the key-phrase unknown, the individual who should attempt to decipher it may be imagined *guessing*, or otherwise attempting to convince himself, that a certain character (*i*, for example), represented the letter *e*. Looking throughout the cryptograph for confirmation of this idea he would meet with nothing but a negation of it. He would see the character in situations where it could not possibly represent *e*. He might, for instance, be puzzled by four *i*'s forming of themselves a single word, without the intervention of any other character, in which case, of course, they could not be *all e*'s. It will be seen that the word *wise* might be thus constructed. We say this may be seen *now*, by us, in possession of the key-phrase, but the question will no doubt occur, how, *without* the key-phrase, and without cognizance of any single letter in the cipher, it would be possible for the interceptor of such a cryptograph to make anything for such a word as *iiii?*

But again. A key-phrase might easily be constructed in which one character would represent seven, eight, or ten letters. Let us then imagine the word *iiiiiiiii* presenting itself in a cryptograph to an individual *without* the proper key-phrase, or, if this be a supposition somewhat too perplexing, let

us suppose it occurring to the person for whom the cipher is designed, and who *has* the key-phrase. What is he to do with such a word as *iiiiiiiii?* In any of the ordinary books upon Algebra will be found a very concise *formula* (we have not the necessary type for its insertion here) for ascertaining the number of arrangements in which *m* letters may be placed, taken *n* at a time. But no doubt there are none of our readers ignorant of the innumerable combinations which may be made from these ten *i*'s. Yet, unless it occur otherwise by accident, the correspondent receiving the cipher would have to write down all these combinations before attaining the word intended, and even when he had written them he would be inexpressibly perplexed in selecting the word designed from the vast number of other words arising in the course of the permutation.

To obviate, therefore, the exceeding difficulty of deciphering this species of cryptograph, on the part of the possessors of the key-phrase, and to confine the deep intricacy of the puzzle to those for whom the cipher was not designed, it becomes necessary that some *order* should be agreed upon by the parties corresponding—some order in reference to which those characters are to be read which represent more than one letter—and this *order* must be held in view by the writer of the cryptograph. It may be agreed, for example, that the *first* time an *i* occurs in the cipher it is to be understood as representing that character which stands against the *first i* in the key-phrase, that the *second* time an *i* occurs it must be supposed to represent that letter which stands opposed to the *second i* in the key-phrase, etc., etc. Thus the *location* of each cipherical letter must be considered in connection with the character itself in order to determine its exact signification.

We say that some preconcerted *order* of this kind is necessary lest the cipher prove too intricate a lock to yield even to its true key. But it will be evident, upon inspection, that our correspondent at Stonington has inflicted upon us a cryptograph in which *no* order has been preserved, in which many characters respectively stand, at absolute random, for many others. If, therefore, in regard to the gauntlet we threw down in April, he should be half-inclined to accuse us of braggadocio, he will yet admit that we have *more* than acted up to our boast. If what we then said was not said *suaviter in modo*, what we now do is at least done *fortiter in re*.

In these cursory observations we have by no means attempted to exhaust the subject of Cryptography. With such object in view a folio might be required. We have indeed mentioned only a few of the ordinary modes of cipher. Even two thousand years ago Æneas Tacticus detailed twenty distinct methods, and modern ingenuity has added much to the science. Our design has been chiefly suggestive, and perhaps we have already bored the readers of the Magazine. To those who desire further information upon this topic we may say that there are extant treatises by Trithemius, Cap. Porta, Vignere, and P. Niceron. The works of the two latter may be found, we believe, in the library of the Harvard University. If, however, there should be sought in these disquisitions, or in any, *rules for the solution* of cipher, the seeker will be disappointed. Beyond some hints in regard to the general structure of language, and some minute exercises in their practical application, he will find nothing upon record which he does not in his own intellect possess.

PINAKIDIA

UNDER the head of "Random Thoughts," "Odds and Ends," "Stray Leaves," "Scraps," "Brevities," and a variety of similar titles, we occasionally meet, in periodicals and elsewhere, with papers of rich interest and value, the result in some cases of much thought and more research, expended, however, at a manifest disadvantage, if we regard merely the estimate which the public are willing to set upon such articles. It sometimes occurs that in papers of this nature may be found a collective mass of general but more usually of classical erudition, which, if dexterously besprinkled over a proper surface of narrative, would be sufficient to make the fortunes of one or two hundred ordinary novelists in these our good days, when all heroes and heroines are necessarily men and women of "extensive acquirements." But for the most part these "Brevities," etc., are either piecemeal cullings at second-hand from a variety of sources hidden or supposed to be hidden, or more audacious pilferings from those vast storehouses of brief facts, memoranda, and opinions in general literature, which are so abundant in all the principal libraries of Germany and France. Of the former species the *Koran* of Laurence Sterne is, at the same time, one of the most consummately impudent and silly, and it may well be doubted whether a single paragraph of any merit in the whole of it may not be found, *nearly verbatim*, in the works of some one of his immediate contemporaries. If the *Lacon* of Mr.

Colton is any better, its superiority consists altogether in a deeper ingenuity in disguising his stolen wares, and in that prescriptive right of the strongest, which, time out of mind, has decided upon calling every Napoleon a conqueror, and every Dick Turpin a thief. Seneca, Machiavelli,* Balzac, the author of "La Maniere de Bien Penser," Bielfeld the German, who wrote in French "Les Premiers Traits de l'Erudition Universelle," Rochefoucault, Bacon, Bolingbroke, and especially Burdon, of "materials for thinking" memory, possess among them indisputable claims to the ownership of nearly everything worth owning in the book.

Of the latter species of theft we see frequent specimens in the continental magazines of Europe, and occasionally meet with them even in the lower class of periodicals in Great Britain. These specimens are usually extracts, by wholesale, from such works as the "Bibliothéque des Memorabilia Literaria," the "Recueil des Bon Pensees," the "Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses," the "Literary Memoirs" of Sallengré, the "Melanges Literaires" of Suard and André, or the "Pieces Interessantes et Peu Connues" of Laplace. D'Israeli's "Curiosities of Literature," "Literary Character," and "Calamities of Authors," have of late years proved exceedingly convenient to some little American pilferers in this line, but are now becoming too generally known to allow much hope of their good things being any longer appropriated with impunity.

Such collections as those of which we have been speaking are usually entertaining in themselves, and

* It is remarkable that much of what Colton has stolen from Machiavelli was previously stolen by Machiavellli from Plutarch A MS. book of the *Apophthegms of the Ancients*, by this latter writer, having fallen into Machiavelli's hands, he put them nearly all into the mouth of his hero, Castrucio Castracani.

for the most part we relish everything about them save their pretentions to originality. In offering ourselves something of the kind to our readers, we wish to be understood as disclaiming in a great degree every such pretention. Most of the following article is original, and will be readily recognised as such by the classical and general reader; some portions of it may have been written down in the words, or nearly in the words, of the primitive authorities. The whole is taken from a confused mass of marginal notes and entries in a commonplace book. No certain arrangement has been considered necessary, and indeed so heterogeneous a farrago it would have been an endless task to methodise. We have chosen the heading *Pinakidia* or Tablets, as one sufficiently comprehensive. It was used for a somewhat similar purpose by Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

The whole of Bulwer's elaborate argument on the immortality of the soul, which he has put into the mouth of "The Ambitious Student," may be confuted through the author's omission of one particular point in his summary of the attributes of Deity—a point which we cannot believe omitted altogether through accident. A single link is deficient in the chain, but the chain is worthless without it. No man doubts the immortality of the soul, yet of all truths, this truth of immortality is the most difficult to prove by any mere series of syllogisms. We would refer our readers to the argument here mentioned.

"The rude, rough, wild waste has its power to please,"

a line in one, Mr. Odiorne's poem, "The Progress of Refinement," is pronounced by the American author

of a book entitled "Antediluvian Antiquities" "the very best alliteration in all poetry."

Lipsius, in his treatise, "De Supplicio Crucis," says that the upright beam of the cross was a *fixture* at the place of execution, whither the criminal was made to bear only the transverse arm. Consequently the painters are in error who depict our Saviour bearing the entire cross.

The tale in Plato's "Convivium," that man at first was male and female, and that, though Jupiter cleft them asunder, there was a natural love towards one another, seems to be only a corruption of the account in Genesis of Eve's being made from Adam's rib.

Corneille has these lines in one of his tragedies:

> "Pleurez, pleurez, mes yeux, et fondez vous en eau,
> La moitié de ma vie a mis l'autre au tombeau."

which may be thus translated,

> "Weep, weep my eyes! It is no time to laugh,
> For half myself has buried the other half."

Over the iron gate of a prison at Ferrara is this inscription—"Ingresso alla prigione di Torquato Tasso."

The Rabbi Manasseh published a book at Amsterdam entitled "The Hopes of Israel." It was founded upon the supposed number and power of the Jews in America. This supposition was derived from a fabulous account by Montesini of his having found a vast concourse of Jews among the Cordilleras.

The word "assassin" is derived, according to Hyle, from *Hassa*, to kill. Some bring it from

Hassan, the first chief of the association; some from the Jewish Essene; Lemoine from a word meaning "herbage"; De Sacy and Von Hammer from "hashish" the opiate of hemp leaves, of which the assassins made a singular use.

The origin of the phrase "corporal oath" is to be found in the ancient usage of touching, upon occasion of attestation, the *corporale* or cloth which covered the consecrated articles.

Montgomery, in his lectures on *Literature* (!), has the following—"Who does not turn with absolute contempt from the signs, and gems, and filters, and caves, and genii of Eastern Tales as from the trinkets of a toy shop, and the trumpery of a raree show?" What man of genius but must answer "Not I?"

There is no particular air known throughout Switzerland by the name of the *Ranz des Vaches*. Every canton has its own song, varying in words, notes, and even language. Mr. Cooper, the novelist, is our authority.

The Abbé de St. Pierre has fixed in his language two significant words—viz. *bienfaisance*, and the diminutive *la gloriole*.

"Incidis in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim" is neither in Virgil nor Ovid, as often supposed, but in the "Alexandrics" of Philip Gualtier, a French poet of the thirteenth century.

The psalter of Solomon, which contains eighteen psalms, is a work which was found in Greek in the library of Augsburg, and has been translated into

Latin by John Lewis de la Cerda. It is supposed not to be Solomon's, but the work of some Hellenistic Jew, and composed in imitation of David's psalms. The psalter was known to the ancients, and was formerly in the famous Alexandrian MS.

It is probable that the Queen of Sheba was Balkis, that Sheba was a kingdom in the southern part of Arabia Felix, and that the people were called Sabæans. These lines of Claudian relate to the people and queen:—

> "Medis, levibusque Sabæis
> Imperat hic sexus; reginarumque sub armis
> Barbariæ pars magna jacet."

Sheridan declared he would rather be the author of the ballad called "Hosier's Ghost," by Glover, than of the Annals of Tacitus.

The word Jehovah is not Hebrew. The Hebrews had no such letters as J or V. The word is properly Jah, Uah, compounded of *Jah*, essence, and *Uah*, existing. Its full meaning is the self-existing essence of all things.

The "Song of Solomon," throwing aside the heading of the chapters, which is the work of the English translators, contains nothing which relates to the Saviour or the church. It does not, like every other sacred book, contain even the name of the Deity.

The word translated "slanderers" in 1 Timothy iii. 2, and that translated "false accusers" in Titus ii. 3, are "*female devils*" in the original Greek of the New Testament.

The Hebrew language contains no word (except perhaps Jehovah) which conveys to the mind the idea

of eternity. The translators of the Old Testament have used the word "eternity" but once (Isa. lvii. 15).

A version of the Psalms was published in 1642 by William Slatyer, of which this is a specimen:—

> "The righteous shall his sorrows scan,
> And laugh at him, and say, 'Behold!
> What hath become of this here man,
> That on his riches was so bold.'"

Milton, in "Paradise Lost," has this passage:—

> "When the *scourge*
> Inexorably, and the *torturing hour*
> Call us to penance;"

Gray, in his "Ode to Adversity," has:—

> "Thou tamer of the human breast,
> Whose iron *scourge* and *torturing hour*
> The bad affright."

Gray tells us that the image of his bard, where

> "Loose his beard, and hoary hair
> Streamed like a meteor to the troubled air,"

was taken from a picture by Raphael: yet the beard of Hudibras is also likened to a meteor:—

> "This hairy meteor did denounce
> The fall of sceptres and of crowns."

Dryden, in his "Absalom and Achitophel," has these lines:—

> "David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
> And heaven had wanted one immortal song;"

Pope, in his "Epistle to Arbuthnot," has:—

"Friend of my life, which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song."

In Suidas is a letter from Dionysius, the Areopagite, dated Heliopolis in the fourth year of the 202d Olympiad (the year of Christ's crucifixion), to his friend Apollophanes, in which is mentioned a total eclipse of the sun at noon. "Either," says Dionysius, "the author of nature suffers, or he sympathises with some who do."

A curious passage in a letter from Cicero to his literary friend Papirius Pætus, shows that our custom of annexing a farce of pantomime to a tragic drama existed among the Romans.

In Hudibras are these lines:—

"Each window, like the pillory, appears
With heads thrust through, nailed by the ears;"

Young, in his "Love of Fame," has the following:—

"An opera, like a pillory, may be said
To nail our ears down and expose our head."

Goldsmith's celebrated lines,

"Man wants but little here below
Nor wants that little long,"

are stolen from Young, who has

"Man wants but little, nor that little long."

Archbishop Usher, in a manuscript of St. Patrick's Life, said to have been found at Louvain as an original of a very remote date, detected several entire passages purloined from his own writings.

"The Slipper of Cinderella," says the editor of the new edition of Wharton, "finds a parallel in the history of Rhodope." Cinderella is a tale of universal currency. An ancient Danish ballad has some of the incidents. It is popular amongst the Welsh—also among the Poles—in Hesse, and in Servia. Schottky found it among the Servian fables. Rollenbagen, in his *Froschmauseler*, speaks of it as the tale of the despised *Aschenpossel*. Luther mentions it. It is in the Italian Pentamerone under the title of Cenerentola.

Boileau is mistaken in saying that Petrarch, "*qui est regardé comme le père du sonnet*," borrowed it from the French or Provencal writers. The Italian sonnet can be traced back as far as the year 1200. Petrarch was not born until 1304.

Dante gives the name of *sonnet* to his little canzone or ode beginning

"O voi che per la via d'Amor passate."

The lines

"For he that fights and runs away
May live to fight another day,
But he that is in battle slain
Will never rise to fight again."

are not to be found, as is thought, in Hudibras. Butler's verses ran thus:—

"For he that flies may fight again,
Which he can never do that's slain."

The former are in a volume of "Poems" by Sir John Mennes, reign of Charles the Second. The original idea is in Demosthenes. Ανηρ ὁ φευγων και παλιν μαχησεται.

The noble simile of Milton, of Satan with the rising sun, in the first book of the "Paradise Lost," had nearly occasioned the suppression of that epic; it was supposed to contain a treasonable allusion.

Campbell's line

"Like angel visits, few and far between,"

is a palpable plagiarism. Blair has

"Its visits,
Like angel visits, short and far between."

The character of the ancient Bacchus, that graceful divinity, seems to have been little understood by Dryden. The line in Virgil

"Et quocunque deus circum caput egit *honestum*"

is thus grossly mistranslated,

"On whate'er side he turns his *honest* face."

Macrobius gives the form of an imprecation by which the Romans believed whole towns could be demolished and armies defeated. It commences "Dis Pater sive Jovis mavis sive quo alio nomine fas est nominare," and ends, "Si hæc ita faxitis ut ego sciam, sentiam, intelligamque, tum quisquis votum hoc faxit recte factum esto, ovibus atris tribus, Tellus mater, teque, Jupiter, obtestor."

The *Courtier* of Baldazzar Castiglione, 1528, is the first attempt at periodical moral essay with which we are acquainted. The *Noctes Atticæ* of Aulus Gellius cannot be allowed to rank as such.

These lines were written over the closet-door of M. Menard:—

"Las d'espérer, et de me plaindre
De l'amour, des grands, et du sort
C'est ici que j' attends la mort
Sans la desirer ou la craindre."

Martin Luther, in his reply to Henry the Eighth's book, by which the latter acquired the title of "Defender of the Faith," calls the monarch very unceremoniously "a pig, an ass, a dunghill, the spawn of an adder, a basilisk, a lying buffoon dressed in a king's robes, a mad fool with a frothy mouth and a whorish face."

"An unshaped kind of something first appeared,"

is a line in Cowley's famous description of the Creation.

The "Turkish Spy" is the original of many similar works, among the best of which are Montesquieu's "Persian Letters," and the "British Spy" of our own Wirt. It was written undoubtedly by John Paul Marana, an Italian, *in* Italian, but probably was first published in French. Dr. Johnson, who only saw an English translation, supposed it an English work. Marana died in 1693.

Corneille's celebrated "Moi" of Medea is borrowed from Seneca. Recine, in "Phædra," has stolen nearly the whole scene of the declaration of love from the same puerile writer.

The peculiar zodiac of the comets is comprised in these verses of Cassini:—

Antinous, Pegasusque, Andromeda, Taurus, Orion,
Procyon, atque Hydrus, Centaurus, Scorpius, Arcus.

A religious hubbub, such as the world has seldom seen, was excited, during the reign of Frederick II.,

by the *imagined* virulence of a book entitled "The Three Impostors." It was attributed to Pierre des Vignes, chancellor of the king, who was accused by the Pope of having treated the religions of Moses, Jesus, and Mahomet as political fables. The work in question, however, which was squabbled about, abused, defended, and familiarly *quoted* by all parties, is well proved never to have existed.

Theophrastus, in his botanical works, anticipated the sexual system of Linnæus. Philolaus of Crotona maintained that comets appeared after a certain revolution—and Æcetes contended for the existence of what is now called the new world. Pulci, "The Sire of the Half Serious Rhyme," has a passage expressly alluding to a western continent. Dante, two centuries before, has the same allusion:—

> "De vostri sensi ch'è del rimanente
> Non vogliate negar l'esperenza,
> Diretro al sol, del mondo sensa gente."

The "Lamentations" of Jeremiah are written, with the exception of the last chapter, in acrostic verse; that is to say, every line or couplet begins in alphabetical order, with some letter in the Hebrew alphabet. In the third chapter each letter is repeated three times successively.

The fullest account of the Amazons is to be found in Diodorus Siculus.

Cicero makes *finis* masculine, Virgil feminine. *Usque ad eum finem*—Cicero. *Quæ finis standi? Hæc finis Priami fatorum*—Virgil.

Dante left a poem in three languages—Latin, Provencal and Italian. Rambaud de Vachieras left one in five.

Marcus Antoninus wrote a book entitled Τῶν εἰς ἑαυτόν —"Of the things which concern himself." It would be a good title for a diary.

The stream flowing through the middle of the valley of Jehoshaphat is called in the Gospel of St. John "the brook of cedars." In the Septuagint the word is κεδρον, darkness, from the Hebrew *kiddar*, black, and not κεδρων, of cedars.

Seneca says that Appion, a grammarian of the age of Caligula, maintained that Homer himself made the division of the Iliad and Odyssey into books, and evidences the first word of the Iliad, Μηνιν, the Μη of which signifies 48, the number of books in both poems. Seneca, however, adds "*Talia sciat oportet qui multa vult scire.*"

Hedelin, a Frenchman, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, denied that any such person as Homer ever existed, and supposed the Iliad to be made up *ex tragediis, et variis canticis de trivio mendicatorum et circulatorum—à la manière des chansons du Portneuf.*

There are about one thousand lines identical in the Iliad and Odyssey.

The shield of Achilles, in Homer, seems to have been copied from some *pharos* which the poet had seen in Egypt. What he describes on the central part of the shield is a map of the earth and of the celestial appearances.

Under a portrait of Tiberio Fiurelli who invented the character of Scaramouch, are these verses,—

"Cet illustre Comedien
De son art traca la carrière;
Il fut le maitre de Moliere,
Et la Nature fut le sien."

In Cary's "Dante," the following passage:—

"And pilgrim newly on his road with love,
Thrills if he hear the vesper bell from far,
That seems to mourn for the expiring day."

Gray has also

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day."

Marmontel, in the "Encyclopédie" declares that the Italians did not possess a single comedy worth reading—therein displaying his ignorance. Some of the greatest names in Italian literature were writers of comedy. Baretti mentions a collection of four thousand dramas made by Apostolo Leno, of which the greater part were comedies, many of a high order.

A comedy or opera by Andreini was the origin of "Paradise Lost." Andreini's "Adamo" was the model of Milton's Adam.

Milton has the expression "Forget thyself to marble." Pope has the line "I have not yet forgot myself to stone."

The most particular history of the Deluge, and the nearest of any to the account given by Moses is to be found in Lucian (De Dea Syria).

The Greeks had no historian prior to Cadmus Milesius, nor any public inscription of which we can be certified before the laws of Draco.

So great is the uncertainty of ancient history that the epoch of Semiramis cannot be ascertained within 1535 years; for according to

Syncellus, she lived	before	Christ	2177
Patavius	"	"	2060
Helvicus	"	"	2248
Eusebius	"	"	1984
Mr. Jackson	"	"	1964
Archbishop Usher	"	"	1215
Philo Byblius, from Sanchoniathon			1200
Herodotus about			713

An extract from "The Mystery of St. Dennis" is in the "Bibliotheque du Theatre Francais, depuis son origine," Dresde, 1768. In this serious drama, St. Dennis, having been tortured and at length decapitated, rises very quietly, takes his head under his arm, and walks off the stage in all the dignity of martyrdom.

The idea of "No light but rather darkness visible" was perhaps suggested to Milton by Spenser's

> "A little glooming light much like a shade."

Francis le Brossano engraved these verses upon a marble tomb which he erected to Petrarch at Argua.

> "Frigida Francisci tegit hic lapis ossa Petrarcæ.
> Suscipe, virgo parens, animam; sate virgine, parce,
> Fessaque jam terris, cœli requiescat in arce."

Bochart derives *Elysium* from the Phœnician Elysoth, joy, through the Greek Ἠλυσιον; *Circe* from the Phœnician Kirkar, to corrupt; *Siren* from the Phœnician Sir, to sing; *Scylla* from the Phœnician Scol, destruction; *Charybdis* from the Phœnician Chor-obdam, chasm of ruin.

Of the ten tragedies which are attributed to Seneca (the only Roman tragedies extant), nine are on Greek subjects.

Voltaire's ignorance of antiquity is laughable. In his Essay on Tragedy, prefixed to "Brutus," he actually boasts of having introduced the Roman senate on the stage in red mantles. "The Greeks," as he asserts, "*font paraître ses acteurs* (tragic) *sur des espèces d'échasses, le visage convert d'un masque qui exprime la douleur d'un côté et la joye de l'autre.*" The only circumstance upon which he could possibly have founded such an accusation is that in the *new comedy* masks were worn with one eyebrow drawn up and the other down, to denote a busybody or inquisitive meddler.

There is a book by a Jesuit, Père Labbe, entitled *La Bibliothèque des Bibliothèques;* it is a catalogue of all authors in all nations who have written catalogues of books.

Lucretius, lib. v. 93, 96, has the words,

"——terras—
Una dies dabit exitio."

Ovid the lines,

"Carmine sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucreti,
Exitio terras cum dabit una dies."

It is a remarkable fact that during the whole period of the Middle Ages, the Germans lived in utter ignorance of the art of writing.

A version of the Psalms in 1564, by Archbishop Parker, has the following—

"Who sticketh to God in stable trust,
As Sion's mount he stands full just,
Which moveth no whit, nor yet can reel,
But standeth for ever as stiff as steel."

A part of the 137th Psalm runs thus:—"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth," which has been thus paraphrased in a version of the Psalms—

"If I forget thee ever,
Then let me prosper never,
But let it cause
My tongue and jaws
To cling and cleave together."

At the bottom of an obelisk which Pius VI. was erecting at great expense near the entrance of the Quirinal Palace in 1783, while the people were starving for bread, were found written these words.

"Signore dia questa pietra chi divenga pane."
"Lord, command that these stones be made bread."

SOME SECRETS OF THE MAGAZINE PRISON-HOUSE

THE want of an International Copyright Law, by rendering it nearly impossible to obtain anything from the book-sellers in the way of remuneration for literary labour, has had the effect of forcing many of our very best writers into the service of the Magazines and Reviews, which, with a pertinacity that does them credit, keep up in a certain or uncertain degree the good old saying that even in the thankless field of Letters the labourer is worthy of his hire. How—by dint of what dogged instinct of the honest and proper, these journals have contrived to persist in their paying practices, in the very teeth of the opposition got up by the Fosters and Leonard Scotts, who furnish for eight dollars any four of the British periodicals for a year, is a point we have had much difficulty in settling to our satisfaction, and we have been forced to settle it at last upon no more reasonable ground than that of a still lingering *esprit de patrie*. That Magazines can live, and not only live but thrive, and not only thrive but afford to disburse money for original contributions, are facts which can only be solved, under the circumstances, by the really fanciful but still agreeable supposition that there is somewhere still existing an ember not altogether quenched among the fires of good feeling for letters and literary men that once animated the American bosom.

It would *not do* (perhaps this is the idea) to let our poor-devil authors absolutely starve while we grow

fat, in a literary sense, on the good things of which we unblushingly pick the pocket of all Europe: it would not be exactly the thing *comme il faut* to permit a positive atrocity of this kind; and hence we have Magazines, and hence we have a portion of the public who subscribe to these Magazines (through sheer pity), and hence we have Magazine publishers (who sometimes take upon themselves the duplicate title of "editor *and* proprietor"),—publishers, we say, who, under certain conditions of good conduct, occasional puffs, and decent subserviency at all times, make it a point of conscience to encourage the poor-devil author with a dollar or two, more or less, as he behaves himself properly and abstains from the indecent habit of turning up his nose.

We hope, however, that we are not so prejudiced or so vindictive as to insinuate that what certainly does look like illiberality on the part of them (the Magazine publishers) is really an illiberality chargeable to *them*. In fact, it will be seen at once that what we have said has a tendency directly the reverse of any such accusation. These publishers pay *something*—other publishers nothing at all. Here certainly is a difference—although a mathematician might contend that the difference might be infinitesimally small. Still, these Magazine editors and proprietors *pay* (that is the word), and with your true poor-devil author the smallest favours are sure to be thankfully received. No: the illiberality lies at the door of the demagogue-ridden public, who suffer their anointed delegates (or perhaps arointed—which is it?) to insult the common sense of them (the public) by making orations in our national halls on the beauty and conveniency of robbing the Literary Europe on the highway, and on the gross absurdity in especial of admitting

so unprincipled a principle that a man has any right and title either to his own brains or to the flimsy material that he chooses to spin out of them, like a confounded caterpillar as he is. If anything of this gossamer character stands in need of protection, why we have our hands full at once with the silk-worms and the *morus multicaulis*.

But if we cannot, under the circumstances, complain of the absolute illiberality of the Magazine publishers (since pay they do), there is at least one particular in which we have against them good grounds of accusation. Why (since pay they must) do they not pay with a good grace and *promptly?* Were we in an ill-humour at this moment we could a tale unfold which would erect the hair on the head of Shylock. A young author, struggling with Despair itself in the shape of a ghastly poverty, which has no alleviation—no sympathy from an every-day world, that cannot understand his necessities, and that would pretend not to understand them if it comprehended them ever so well—this young author is politely requested to compose an article, for which he will "be handsomely paid." Enraptured, he neglects perhaps for a month the sole employment which affords him the chance of a livelihood, and having starved through the month (he and his family) completes at length the month of starvation and the article, and despatches the latter (with a broad hint about the former) to the pursy "editor" and bottle-nosed "proprietor" who has condescended to honour him (the poor devil) with his patronage. A month (starving still), and no reply. Another month—still none. Two months more—still none. A second letter, modestly hinting that the article may not have reached its destination —still no reply. At the expiration of six additional

months, personal application is made at the "editor and proprietor's" office. Call again. The poor devil goes out, and does not fail to call again. Still call again;—and call again is the word for three or four months more. His patience exhausted, the article is demanded. No—he can't have it—(the truth is, it was too good to be given up so easily)—"it is in print," and "contributions of this character are never paid for (it is a *rule* we have) under six months after publication. Call in six months after the issue of your affair, and your money is ready for you—for we are business men ourselves—prompt." With this the poor devil is satisfied, and makes up his mind that the "editor and proprietor" is a gentleman, and that of course he (the poor devil) will wait as requested. And it is supposable that he would have waited if he could—but Death in the meantime would not. He dies, and by the good luck of his decease (which came by starvation) the fat "editor and proprietor" is fatter henceforward and for ever to the amount of five and twenty dollars, very cleverly saved, to be spent generously in canvas-backs and champagne.

There are two things which we hope the reader will not do as he runs over this article: first, we hope that he will not believe that we write from any personal experience of our own, for we have only the reports of actual sufferers to depend upon; and second, that he will not make any personal application of our remarks to any Magazine publisher now living, it being well known that they are all as remarkable for their generosity and urbanity, as for their intelligence and appreciation of Genius.

ANASTATIC PRINTING

IT is admitted by every one that of late there has been a rather singular invention, called Anastatic Printing, and that this invention may possibly lead, in the course of time, to some rather remarkable results—among which the one chiefly insisted upon is the abolition of the ordinary stereotyping process—but this seems to be the amount, in America at least, of distinct understanding on this subject.

"There is no exquisite beauty," says Bacon, "without some strangeness in the proportions." The philosopher had reference, here, to beauty in its common acceptation—but the remark is equally applicable to all the forms of beauty—that is to say, to everything which arouses profound interest in the heart or intellect of man. In every such thing, strangeness—in other words *novelty*—will be found a principal element: and so universal is this law that it has no exception even in the case of this principal element itself. Nothing unless it be novel —*not even novelty itself*—will be the source of very intense excitement among men. Thus the *ennuyé* who travels in the hope of dissipating his *ennui* by the perpetual succession of novelties, will invariably be disappointed in the end. He receives the impression of novelty so continuously that it is at length no novelty to receive it. And the man, in general, of the nineteenth century—more especially of our own particular epoch of it—is very much in the predicament of the traveller in question. We

are so habituated to new inventions that we no longer get from newness the vivid interest which should appertain to the new—and no example could be adduced more distinctly showing that the *mere* importance of a novelty will not suffice to gain for it universal attention than we find in the invention of *Anastatic Printing*. It excites not one fiftieth part of the comment which was excited by the comparatively frivolous invention of Sennefelder;—but he lived in the good old days when a novelty was novel. Nevertheless, while Lithography opened the way for a very agreeable pastime, it is the province of Anastatic Printing to revolutionise the world.

By means of this discovery anything written, drawn, or printed, can be made to stereotype itself, with absolute accuracy, in five minutes.

Let us take, for example, a page of this Journal; supposing only one side of the leaf to have printing on it. We damp the leaf with a certain acid diluted, and then place it between two leaves of blotting-paper to absorb superfluous moisture. We then place the printed side in contact with a zinc plate that lies on the table. The acid in the interspaces between the letters immediately corrodes the zinc, but the acid on the letters themselves has no such effect, having been neutralised by the ink. Removing the leaf at the end of five minutes, we find a reversed copy, in slight relief, of the printing on the page—in other words, we have a stereotype plate, from which we can print a vast number of absolute facsimiles of the original printed page—which latter has not been at all injured in the process—that is to say, we can still produce from it (or from any impression of the stereotype plate) new stereotype plates *ad libitum*. Any engraving, or any pen-

and-ink drawing, or any MS. can be stereotyped in precisely the same manner.

The *facts* of this invention are established. The process is in successful operation both in London and Paris. We have seen several specimens of printing done from the plates described, and have now lying before us a leaf (from the London Art-Union) covered with drawing, MS., letterpress, and impressions from woodcuts—the whole printed from the Anastatic stereotypes, and warranted by the Art-Union to be absolute *facsimiles* of the originals.

The process can scarcely be regarded as a *new* invention—and appears to be rather the modification and successful application of two or three previously ascertained principles—those of etching, electrography, lithography, etc. It follows from this that there will be much difficulty in establishing or maintaining a right of patent, and the probability is that the benefits of the process will soon be thrown open to the world. As to the secret—it can only be a secret in name.

That the discovery (if we may so call it) has been made, can excite no surprise in any thinking person —the only matter for surprise is that it has not been made many years ago. The obviousness of the process, however, in no degree lessens its importance. Indeed its inevitable results enkindle the imagination, and embarrass the understanding.

Every one will perceive at once that the ordinary process of stereotyping will be abolished. Through this ordinary process a publisher, to be sure, is enabled to keep on hand the means of producing edition after edition of any work the certainty of whose sale will justify the cost of stereotyping—which is trifling *in comparison* with that of re-setting

the matter. But still, *positively*, this cost (of stereotyping) is great. Moreover, there cannot always be certainty about sales. Publishers frequently are forced to re-set works which they have neglected to stereotype, thinking them unworthy the expense; and many excellent works are not published at all, because small editions do not pay, and the anticipated sales will not warrant the cost of stereotype. *Some* of these difficulties will be at once remedied by the Anastatic Printing, and *all* will be remedied in a brief time. A publisher has only to print as many copies as are immediately demanded. He need print no more than a dozen, indeed, unless he feels perfectly confident of success. Preserving *one* copy, he can from this, at no other cost than that of the zinc, produce with any desirable rapidity, as many impressions as he may think proper. Some idea of the advantages thus accruing may be gleaned from the fact that in several of the London publishing warehouses there is deposited in stereotype plates alone property to the amount of a million sterling.

The next view of the case, in point of obviousness, is, that if necessary, a hundred thousand impressions per hour, or even infinitely more, can be taken of any newspaper, or similar publication. As many presses can be put in operation as the occasion may require —indeed there can be no limit to the number of copies producible, provided we have no limit to the number of presses.

The tendency of all this to cheapen information, to diffuse knowledge and amusement, and to bring before the public the very class of works which are most valuable, but least in circulation on account of unsaleability—is what need scarcely be suggested to any one. But benefits such as these are merely

the immediate and most obvious—by no means the most important.

For some years, perhaps, the strong spirit of conventionality—of conservation—will induce authors in general to have recourse, as usual, to the setting of type. A printed book *now* is more sightly, and more legible than any MS., and for some years the idea will not be overthrown that this state of things is one of necessity. But by degrees it will be remembered that, while MS. was a *necessity*, men wrote after such fashion that no books printed in modern times have surpassed their MSS. either in accuracy or in beauty. This consideration will lead to the cultivation of a neat and distinct style of handwriting—for authors will perceive the immense advantage of giving their own MSS. directly to the public without the expensive interference of the type-setter, and the often ruinous intervention of the publisher. All that a man of letters need do, will be to pay some attention to legibility of MS., arrange his pages to suit himself, and stereotype them instantaneously, as arranged. He may intersperse them with his own drawings, or with anything to please his own fancy, in the certainty of being fairly brought before his readers with all the freshness of his original conception about him.

And at this point we are arrested by a consideration of infinite moment, although of a seemingly shadowy character. The cultivation of accuracy in MS. thus enforced will tend, with an inevitable impetus, to every species of improvement in style, more especially in the points of concision and distinctness; and this again, in a degree even more noticeable, to precision of thought and luminous arrangement of matter. There is a very peculiar and easily intelligible reciprocal influence between

the thing written and the manner of writing, but the latter has the predominant influence of the two. The more remote effect on philosophy at large, which will inevitably result from improvement of style and thought in the points of concision, distinctness, and accuracy, need only be suggested to be conceived.

As a consequence of attention being directed to neatness and beauty of MS., the antique profession of the scribe will be revived, affording abundant employment to women, their delicacy of organization fitting them peculiarly for such tasks. The female amanuensis indeed will occupy very nearly the position of the present male type-setter, whose industry will be diverted perforce into other channels.

These considerations are of vital importance, but there is yet one beyond them all. The value of every book is a compound of its literary value and its physical or mechanical value, as the product of physical labour applied to the physical material. But at present the latter value immensely predominates even in the works of the most esteemed authors. It will be seen, however, that the new condition of things will at once give the ascendency to the literary values, and thus, by their literary values, will books come to be estimated among men. The wealthy gentleman of "elegant leisure" will lose the vantage-ground now afforded him, and will be forced to tilt on terms of equality with the poor-devil author. At present the literary world is a species of anomalous congress, in which the majority of the members are constrained to listen in silence while all the eloquence proceeds from a privileged few. In the new *régime* the humblest will speak as often and as freely as the most exalted, and will be sure of re-

ceiving just that amount of attention which the intrinsic merit of their speeches may deserve.

From what we have said it will be evident that the discovery of Anastatic Printing will not only not obviate the necessity of copyright laws, and of an international law in especial, but will render this necessity more imperative and more apparent. It has been shown that in depressing the value of the *physique* of a book the invention will proportionally elevate the value of its *morale*, and since it is the latter value alone which the copyright laws are needed to protect, the necessity of the protection will be only the more urgent and more obvious than ever.

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